AN INJURED QUEEN, CAROLINE OF BRUNSWICK

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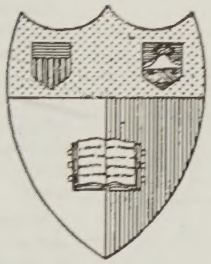

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AN INJURED QUEEN

CAROLINE OF BRUNSWICK

BY

LEWIS MELVILLE

WITH THIRTY-NINE ILLUSTRATIONS, INCLUDING
TWO PHOTOGRAVURE FRONTISPIECES

VOL. I

LONDON
HUTCHINSON & CO.
PATERNOSTER ROW
1912

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY: a Biography.

THE THACKERAY COUNTRY

SOME ASPECTS OF THACKERAY

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SPENT IN HIS COMPANY

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR

PREFACE

IN days that were earlier it was essential that a heroine should approach very closely to perfection. If she did not have all the accomplishments, at least she had all the virtues. She was beautiful, tender-hearted, trustful, true, forgiving, ready to lay down her life for her husband, however unworthy he might have shown himself. A single spot, and she could not be a heroine: at most, then, she might be the friend of the heroine over whom the paragon wept and prayed as she knelt by the side of her little white dimity cot. Happily since those times we have gone far, and have advanced more than one step to Nature: now a woman may have every vice but one and still be a heroine, her one virtue entitling her to have her name emblazoned on the roll of honour.

Caroline of Brunswick had faults—many faults, indeed. She had the defects that came from a bad upbringing in a dissolute Court under the control of a foolish mother and a profligate father. She was loquacious, her talk was not seldom loose, she was always impatient of etiquette. She yearned for affection, and therefore was inclined to make friends too freely and to select her companions with little discrimination; but while she was as true to those whom she admitted to her intimacy as any one could desire, alas! many whom she trusted, alike those of high degree and those

of low station, betrayed her; whilst others used her for their own ends, political or social, and advocated her cause or denied it as suited their immediate objects.

This unhappy royal lady had faults, as has been said, but these were more than balanced by good qualities. She had humour, an antic humour—which saved her even in her most despairing mood from bitterness and cynicism—and an excellent temper. She was without malice; her heart responded to every cry of distress. She was ever ready to assist any unfortunate with her purse and to cheer with sympathy those who had fallen by the way; and for children she had an overwhelming love. It is difficult to find words in which adequately to express appreciation of her courage. During a persecution which endured for more than a quarter of a century, no one heard her utter a moan; bravely she stood against the whole power of the two most potent personages in the land, and fought her foes unflinchingly, cheerfully, unaided by any disinterested friend, save that true, loyal daughter of a noble house, Lady Anne Hamilton, who remained by her side through good report and ill. *Bon sang ne peut mentir.* "As I read the Queen's trial in history," Thackeray has written, "I vote she is not guilty. I don't say it is an impartial verdict, but as one reads her story the heart bleeds for the kindly, generous, outraged creature. If wrong there be, let it lie at his door who wickedly thrust her from it." This, surely, is the view to take of this cruelly ill-used, vastly wronged lady.

"Be to her virtues very kind;
Be to her faults a little blind."

After the Queen's death much harm was done to her memory by the publication of a "Diary Illustrative of the Times of George IV.," written by Lady Charlotte Bury, who (as Lady Charlotte Campbell) had been one of her Ladies-in-waiting and a much-trusted and greatly beloved confidante. On its appearance *The Quarterly Review* attacked the book as bitterly as did *The Edinburgh Review*, wherein Brougham stigmatised it as "this silly, dull, disgraceful publication," and lashed the author with all the power of his satire. Greville dismissed it as "wretched catch-penny trash," and Thackeray's indignation at what he considered a breach of faith caused him to indite a tremendous philippic in the form of a review in *The Times*. The "Diary" (the third and fourth volumes of which were edited by John Galt) contains much rubbish and many foolish comments, but the biographer of Caroline cannot ignore it, because it contains many letters written by the Queen, which, though undoubtedly "prepared for the press," bear indubitable signs of authenticity.* The book was put together in the most careless way conceivable. The letters with which the narrative is interspersed are usually undated, and even when a date is given it cannot be accepted without corroboration; while the correspondence on any one subject, so far from being collected, is usually scattered without rhyme or reason through-

* Many letters of Caroline of Brunswick, gathered together in this work from other sources, also show signs of having been corrected by the editors of the memoirs, etc., in which they appeared; while others, to which this comment might seem to apply, were dictated by her Royal Highness, and were consequently correctly spelt and better phrased than those she wrote herself.

out the four volumes. Many of these letters, which are very valuable, have been introduced into the present work, and it has not been the easiest part of the writer's task to endeavour to arrange them in sequence, whenever possible, to give an approximate date, and to annotate the often obscure references in the text. Lady Charlotte Bury's work has undoubtedly influenced all subsequent writers on Queen Caroline, who perhaps commenced their studies with a bias not unnatural when it is remembered that a majority of the upper class paid court to her husband and before her trial condemned the wife as guilty. Though a royal commission, in 1805, appointed especially to consider the question whether William Austin was the son of Caroline, decided unanimously that this was not the case, yet sixteen years later, "The Queen's will is to-day in the paper," wrote Lady Jerningham. "She has left nearly everything to W. Austin. I think he was her son." Against prejudice and slander, as against stupidity, the gods themselves contend in vain.

During 1820 and immediately after her death in the following year, memoirs of the Queen from the pens of J. H. Adolphus, Robert Huish, Clerk, Nightingale, and others, were issued. Since then, though more than ninety years have passed, only one book * has been published that deals exclusively with the story of her eventful life—"A Queen of Indiscretions," by Signor Clerici, a distinguished professor in the

* Doran's "Memoirs of the Queens of England of the House of Hanover" of course contains an account of Queen Caroline. Another biographical sketch of Caroline will be found in the second volume of Miss Greenwood's "Hanoverian Queens of England," published while the present work was in the press.

University of Parma—and the greater part of this interesting work is devoted to the period when Caroline, weary of ceaseless persecution in the country of her adoption, sought relief in an extended visit abroad. This work contains a brilliant Introduction by Mr. Frederick Chapman, and it is noteworthy that, while Signor Clerici finds her Majesty guilty, Mr. Chapman, having studied the same documents, ranges himself on the side of those who pronounce her innocent.

The present writer has been so fortunate as to be able to secure some new material. He has had the good fortune to have enlisted the assistance of Sir William Cobbett, Mr. Richard Cobbett, and Mr. A. M. Broadley, who have kindly lent him unpublished letters written to the Queen. Especially interesting is the letter (preserved in the Cobbett archives) drafted by William Cobbett in 1821 for her Majesty to send to Prince Leopold, her son-in-law. Among the Morrison MSS. is an unpublished letter from Caroline to Prince Lucien Bonaparte; and in the British Museum are other letters written by her, which appeared in this work for the first time in print, and also, likewise published for the first time, is a remarkable letter from Lady Jersey to the Princess of Wales written when she had, at her Royal Highness's instance, been compelled to retire from the Royal household. All these letters are printed as they were written.*

* The hitherto unpublished letters written by Queen Caroline preserved in the MS. Room of the British Museum are catalogued as follows: Eg. 1177; Add. MSS. 18204 f. 6, 18738 f. 206, 24182 ff. 17–18, 24901 f. 6, 26666 ff. 1–18, 27915 f. 26, 30170 f. 56, 30109 f. 199, 33132 ff. 111–2–3, 34486 f. 93.

It has been my object, as far as possible, to unfold the story of the life of Queen Caroline through the medium of her letters, which never before have been gathered together, and from various sources, published and unpublished, I have collected a mass of correspondence which, I think, presents her in a new and more favourable light than any that has yet been thrown upon her.

A complete list of all the works I have consulted in writing this biography would occupy considerable space, but reference to the most important authorities may briefly be given. Information about the Court of Brunswick and about Caroline before her marriage may be gleaned from Massenbach's "Memoiren zur Geschichte des preussischen Staaten," Mirabeau's "Histoire de la cour de Berlin," Halliday's "History of the House of Guelph," Sir John Stanley's "Præterita," (printed in Adeane's "Early Married Life of Maria Josepha, Lady Stanley"), the first Lord Malmesbury's "Diary and Correspondence," and Lord Fitzmaurice's "Charles William Ferdinand, Duke of Brunswick." First-hand sources for the subsequent years of Caroline's life are the journals, autobiographies, letters, and memoirs, of Brougham, Mary Berry, the Hon. Mrs. Calvert, D'Ompteda, Thomas Moore, Lord Dudley, Lord Glenbervie, Thomas Creevey, the Comtesse de Boigne, William Windham, Charles Greville, Frances William Wynn, Karoline Bauer, Lord Holland, Cornelia Knight, Byron, Joseph Jekyll, Princess Lieven, Thomas Raikes, John Wishaw, Wilberforce, Lord Minto, Lady Jerningham, John Wilson Croker, Lady Louisa Stuart,

Lord Broughton, the Duke of Buckingham, Sir Samuel Romilly, Sir Jonah Barrington, Grantley F. Berkeley, Lord Albemarle, Lord Colchester, Lady Brownlow, Samuel Rogers, Lord Liverpool, Spencer Perceval, Canning, Harriet, Lady Granville, Lord Eldon, George Rose, Lord Sidmouth, Denman, Robert Plumer Ward, "Coke of Norfolk," Lady Hester Stanhope, Sir Walter Scott, and "Monk" Lewis. Besides these may be mentioned the privately printed Harcourt Papers, Bagot's "Canning and his Friends," Richard Rush's "The Court of London from 1819–25," Lady Douglas's "Vindication," the anonymous "Voyages and Travels of Caroline, Queen of Great Britain," "Journals of an English Traveller, 1814–1816" (in Stendal's "Rome, Naples, and Florence"), Campe's "Travels in England in the year 1803," the numerous contemporary pamphlets and lampoons, as well as "The Book," and the reports of the trial, and, of course, the earlier biographies of the Queen. Cobbett's "George IV.," and Wilkins' "Mrs. Fitzherbert and George IV.," contain interesting matter, and Thackeray's lecture on George IV. repays perusal.

During the progress of this work I have consulted many living authorities, and for the assistance they have kindly given I must express my indebtedness to Lord Fitzmaurice of Leigh; Mr. J. M. Bulloch; Mr. Walter Jerrold; and Mr. A. Francis Stewart, who recently edited Lady Charlotte Bury's "Diary," and whose Introduction and notes are a mine of information. Mr. Charles de Boismaison has kindly read the proofs of this book. My thanks are also due to Mr. John Lane for his efforts to secure for me

the privilege of perusing certain (at present) unpublished journals in which Queen Caroline figures largely; to Mr. John Murray, who has courteously allowed me to quote from the "Creevey Papers"; to Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd., who have sanctioned the use of some extracts from the "Jerningham Papers"; to Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co., who have consented to my including passages from the "Letters of Harriet, Lady Granville"; to Messrs. William Blackwood and Sons, who have permitted me to reprint from "The Memoirs of Lord Brougham" letters written by Queen Caroline and Brougham; and to Mr. A. M. Broadley, who has not only sent me copies of unpublished letters of Queen Caroline, but has given me, for reproduction in this work, several interesting and rare portraits and caricatures, the originals of which are in his possession.

LEWIS MELVILLE.

SALCOMBE, HARPENDEN, HERTS.
October 1911.

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AN INJURED QUEEN:
CAROLINE OF BRUNSWICK

CHAPTER I

THE EARLY YEARS OF CAROLINE OF BRUNSWICK

1768–1794

The marriage of the Princess Augusta of England with Charles, Hereditary Prince of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel—The discourtesy shown to the bridal pair by the English Royal Family—The popularity of the Hereditary Prince in London—The Hereditary Prince's infidelities—His opinion of royal matrimonial alliances—Children of the marriage—Princess Charlotte of Brunswick—Conflicting stories as to her fate—The Court of Brunswick under Duke Charles—Princess Caroline as a girl—Her humour and artfulness—Her appearance—Her good qualities Her love of children.

CHARLES WILLIAM FERDINAND, Hereditary Prince of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, then in his twenty-ninth year, came to England in January 1764 to wed the Princess Augusta, eldest daughter of Frederick, Prince of Wales, and sister to King George III. Although the alliance had, of course, been sanctioned by the sovereign, the bridegroom was treated by most of the members of the royal family with the greatest coldness consistent with etiquette. Only those ceremonies that could not be neglected without overt insult were observed; the servants were not given the customary new liveries for the

marriage; and though the Prince was lodged at Somerset House, then a royal residence, he was not paid the compliment of the usual guard of honour. The reason for these slights is to be discovered in the fact that neither the Prince nor the Princess found favour in the eyes of the King and Queen, who, with all their virtues, were, it is now generally admitted, among the most small-minded of monarchs. It had been reported to them that the Prince had openly discussed English politics with a freedom that lacked discretion; while the Princess, who made no secret of her admiration of Pitt, had frequently evinced a desire to meddle in affairs of State, and had, without even a pretence of secrecy, inveighed against the policy of the Court. Because of this attitude the Queen, always in the earlier years of her marriage fearful of losing her influence over her Consort, had never forgiven her sister-in-law.

The Hereditary Prince, a hot-headed, high-spirited young man, was at first taken aback by this unexpected reception accorded by his royal hosts; but, recovering himself, in his turn ignored the Court, accepted the attentions paid him by the leaders of the Opposition, and visited the Duke of Cumberland, the Duke of Newcastle, and Pitt. A handsome man and a brave soldier, who had won his spurs under Frederick the Great, he was popular in general society, while the public regarded him as a hero, and cheered him to the echo whenever he appeared. One day in the streets he kissed his hand to an old soldier of Elliot's Light Horse, who explained to the crowd that surrounded him, "He once led me into a scrape, which nobody but himself could have brought me out of again."

"You may guess," Horace Walpole commented on this incident, "how much this added to the Prince's popularity, which was at high-water mark before." The Prince had arrived in England on January 12, and the marriage took place on January 16. Two days later the royal family went to the opera at Covent Garden, and the audience took the opportunity to show how greatly they resented the way in which their favourite had been treated in high quarters. The King and Queen were received in dead silence: the bridal pair, on their entry, were saluted with salvo after salvo of cheers. "The shouts, claps, and huzzas were immoderate," Walpole informed Sir Horace Mann. "He sat behind his Princess and her brother. The galleries called him to come forward. In the middle of the play he went to be elected a member of the Royal Society, and returned to the theatre, when the applause was renewed."

The Prince was so disgusted by the conduct of his august relatives that he never again set foot in England, and probably his consort would also have refrained from so doing had not her mother, the Princess-Dowager of Wales, sent for her in February 1772, when the old lady was on her death-bed. This summons could not be disobeyed; but, though the Princess had come at the request of her mother, the King and Queen did their utmost, even on this sad occasion, to make her stay unpleasant. Instead of being lodged in a royal residence, as was her undoubted right, a little house in Pall Mall was taken for her; and this was but one of many slights passed upon her, not the least being that the Queen intervened to prevent her having a private interview with her brother,

the King. His Majesty, too, probably inspired by his consort, declined to grant his sister's request that she should be chief mourner at their mother's funeral, on the pretext that she would be too much affected. So indignant did this refusal make the Princess that she would forthwith have returned to Brunswick, but for the prayers of her aunt, the Princess Amelia, who wisely pointed out that such conduct—the provocation thereto being generally unknown—would probably be condemned as indecent : whereupon, with great good sense, she consented to remain until after the interment. Not for thirty-four years did she again see her native land, and then she came only because, after the death of her consort at the battle of Jena, his principality fell into the hands of the French. The unfriendly relations between the Queen and her sister-in-law are important as one of the earliest factors in the tragedy presently to be unfolded.

The Hereditary Prince of Brunswick did not make a good husband, and very soon after the marriage rumours reached England that all was not well. "The Princess of Brunswick," Lady Sarah Bunbury wrote to Lady Susan O'Brien, December 16, 1764, "is brought to bed of a bratt, and they say she has not been taken care of, and that the Prince is not good to her ; but I don't believe a word of it—do you ?" There was certainly this amount of truth in the report, that the Prince was not faithful to his consort. Princess Augusta, with awful frankness, subsequently told Lord Malmesbury that at the time of her marriage the Prince was in love with three women of rank and kept an Italian woman. Too much stress must not be placed upon this, however, for in the eighteenth century

From an engraving by Ridley and Block.

CHARLES, DUKE OF BRUNSWICK.

From an engraving by R. Mackenzie, after a painting by W. M. Craig.

AUGUSTA, DUCHESS OF BRUNSWICK.

it was the rule rather than the exception for Royalties, married as well as unmarried, to have mistresses. In England George I. and George II. had their mistresses, who occupied almost an official position, much business being conducted through them—usually at a price; and Frederick, Prince of Wales, was certainly not behindhand in following the example of his father and grandfather. The seclusion in which George III. was brought up and the strict rule of the Princess-Dowager of Wales probably alone kept that monarch from immoral courses; but all his sons, and especially the heir-apparent, led lives more or less irregular. It has even been stated that—it must be said in fairness that there is no direct evidence—the Hereditary Princess of Brunswick consoled herself for her consort's infidelities. This indulgence by royal personages in *liaisons* was to some extent explained, if not excused, by the Hereditary Prince. "Only private persons can live happily married, because they can choose their mates," he said to Massenbach. "Royalty must make marriages of convenience, which seldom result in happiness. Love does not prompt these alliances, and these marriages not only embitter the lives of the parties to them, but all too frequently have a disastrous effect upon the children, who often are unhealthy in mind or body." Massenbach adds that, as the Prince uttered these words with a look of despair on his face, he mentally compared his heir with his natural son, Forstenburg, who, after laying the foundation of a brilliant military career, was killed during the campaign of 1793. Certainly the fate of the children of his marriage supports the contention of the Hereditary Prince. According to Lord

Edmond Fitzmaurice, the eldest son, Charles George Augustus, was wellnigh imbecile; the second was an idiot, and the third was blind. The fourth, Frederick William, alone survived his father, whom he succeeded. Caroline, the younger daughter, certainly had an antic humour that led some to believe that she had a "kink" in her brain. The career of her sister, Charlotte Georgiana Augusta, after her marriage in her sixteenth year to Frederick William, Prince of Würtemburg, is still wrapt in mystery. It is known that she accompanied her husband to Russia, where they resided for some time. Then the Prince, accusing her of infidelity, placed her in the care of the Empress Caroline II., and left Russia, taking with him the three children of the marriage. Miss Rigby, in her "Letters from the Baltic," states that the Princess was sent by the Empress to Castle Lode, a prison set apart for political offenders, either for having divulged state secrets or because she had attracted the notice of her son Paul. "Be this as it may," Miss Rigby continues, "she was young and very beautiful . . . . was at first lodged here with the retinue and distinction befitting her rank, and is still remembered by some of the oldest noblemen in the province as having entertained them with much grace, and condescended to join in the waltz, where her personal charms and womanly coquetry, joined to rank, gained her many manly hearts. Gradually her attendants were diminished, her liberty curtailed, and the sequel to this was her death under most heartrending circumstances. Her corpse was put into a cellar of the castle, all inquiries stifled upon the spot, and, being obnoxious to Catherine, no appeal to her justice was made.

Nothing was done in Paul's time, nor in Alexander's, nor, in short, till years after, when the Prince of Oldenburg, nearly related to the deceased, came expressly to Castle Lode. Owing to the quality of the atmosphere, the body was found in a state of preservation which left no doubt of identity, and was decently interred in the church of Goldenbech." The story is doubtless more or less true, but its details lack corroboration. The unhappy lady's sister, Princess Caroline, told Lady Charlotte Campbell that after Princess Charlotte's husband left her she became enamoured of a lover of the Empress, by whom she had a child, born in one of the Imperial palaces, and that the Empress then sent her to the Château de Revelt, on the Baltic. "The curious part of the story," Lady Charlotte narrates, "is that Miss Saunders, the Princess of Wales's maid, at this time living with her, had a sister, which sister lived as maid to Princess Charlotte, and she, after a time, came from the Château de Revelt back to Brunswick, saying her mistress was in perfect health, but had dismissed her from her service, as she no longer required her attendance. She gave her money and jewels, and, after vain entreaties to be allowed to remain with her royal mistress, to whom she was much attached, Miss Saunders's sister left the Princess Charlotte. Not long after this word was brought to the Duke of Brunswick that the Princess Charlotte died suddenly of some putrid disorder, which made it necessary to bury the body immediately, without waiting for any ceremonies due to the rank of the deceased. All further inquiries that were made ended with this account, and no light was thrown upon this business. Some years subse-

quently to this a travelling Jew arrived at Brunswick, who swore that he saw the Princess Charlotte at the opera at *Leghorn.* He was questioned, and declared that he could not be mistaken in her."

When Caroline was twelve years old (in 1780), her father, in succession to his father, became Duke of Brunswick. The old Duke had spent money lavishly, and at his death left his principality in debt to the enormous amount of forty million livres. It was therefore incumbent upon Duke Charles to practise the most rigid economy—at least the most rigid economy that a reigning sovereign in the eighteenth century could conceive. " His country is as free as it can be," Mirabeau, who was at Brunswick in July 1786, noted in the " Secret History of the Court of Berlin," and is happy and contented, except that the trading class regrets the prodigality of his father." " Not," Mirabeau was careful to add, " that the reigning Duke is less sensible to elegant pleasure than another." Certainly Duke Charles was sensible to pleasure, albeit it is doubtful if any person, not a diplomatist, would have described it as elegant.

The royal circle at the Court of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel in the years after Duke Charles ascended the throne was small. There were the Duke's two sisters, and his uncle, Prince Ferdinand, the hero of Minden. The Dowager-Duchess frequently attended, and the children, as they grew up, usually were allowed to put in an appearance for an hour or two. Distinguished foreigners were always made welcome, and every attention was paid to them. In their case antecedents were not too closely examined, but every Brunswicker was by birth *hof-fähig* or not *hof-*

fähig. If he did not belong to the class that could claim of right the *entrée*, it was strictly denied him; but, if he came of the privileged class, once he was admitted to Court, he found that there was little of the strict etiquette enforced by most German princes. The Court was very hospitable, and very gay, and though an old chronicler wrote down that it was more remarkable for its levity than for its immorality, it is not by any impartial historian to be denied that there was immorality enough, and indeed to spare—as was only to be expected in a Court that modelled itself upon that of Versailles. It was at least very agreeable. The Duke was a man of polished manners, possessed of dignity but showing in his demeanour no trace of haughtiness; in fact, making himself as pleasant as he could. Nor ill-informed either, as were so many of his brother-sovereigns, having had the privilege of enjoying the conversation of Helvetius, Winckelmann, and Marmontel; indeed Mirabeau wrote him down "a man of uncommon stamp." The Duchess, though very foolish, was good-natured, and of an affectionate disposition. "*A la vérité,*" Mirabeau described her, "*elle est toute anglaise, par les goûts, par les principes, et par les manières, au point que son indépendance, presque cynique, fait, avec l'étiquette des cours allemandes, le contraste le plus singulier que je connaisse.*" The Duchess had a villa, called Little Richmond, about three miles outside the fortified capital, and there she frequently entertained. The Dowager-Duchess also received regularly at her palace in the city, and the example of this hospitality was contagious. Lesser persons gave balls and masquerades, and M. Ferron, Minister of Finance, and Baron Munchausen, *grand-*

maître de la cour, were noted for their supper-parties. When there was nothing else to do in the evening, the royal theatre gave performances, which were well attended. Not the least interesting were the entertainments given by the Duke's accomplished mistress, Madame de Hertzfeldt, often called the Egeria of Brunswick, who played her part so well, and was so reasonable in all matters, that whenever the Duke began to show a partiality for another woman the Duchess joined with Madame de Hertzfeldt to keep the disturber at a safe distance from his Royal Highness.

Whether the Court of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel was as bad as, or worse than, other courts of the day, there is no doubt that it was not a good training-ground for a young girl, and indeed Caroline, in later days, endorsed this view when she declared that whatever was good in her she owed to the Baroness von Münster, who was for some years her governess. Surrounded in her apartments, for the most part, by the elderly women who were appointed her ladies, and whom formal manners accorded ill with her youthful vivacity, the Princess took every opportunity to escape to the freer atmosphere of the Court, where, of course, she saw many things that she ought not to have seen and heard many things she should not have heard. Upon some children these things would have left no impression, but Caroline was a very bright, observant, and precocious girl. At an early age she gave evidence of a bold and independent mind, as also of a keen sense of humour. Asked by one of her tutors, "In what country is the lion found?" the answer came pat, "In the heart of a Brunswicker." Told that she must be careful when on horseback,

"Fear," she retorted, "is a word of which a Brunswicker is ignorant." When the Duke begged Mirabeau for definitions of time and space, Caroline, bethinking herself of an ugly old lady of the Court, took it upon herself to answer: "*L'espace se trouve dans la bouche de Madame X., et le temps dans le visage.*" Being reproached one day for excessive gaiety and heedlessness of the future, "Gone is gone," she declared; "that which is gone will never return, and that which is to come will come of itself"—which may perhaps be regarded as an intelligent anticipation of Heine's death-bed utterance, "*Dieu me pardonnera, c'est son métier.*" She expressed the belief that every one had a right to form an opinion, and that she who did not, but allowed herself to be a mere puppet, was like a piece of barren ground which will not bear a single blade of grass. She enjoyed an argument, and her keen young wits were often more than a match for her none-too-well-equipped tutors. "Madame, can you tell me why you are wicked?" she asked the Baroness de Bode, her first governess. The lady was staggered, but at last replied, "Because an evil spirit impels me to do what is wrong." "But why do you suffer yourself to be impelled?" "Because I cannot overcome my bad nature." "Oh, you cannot!" said the Princess. "Well, if you cannot, you are only like a piece of clay; and so, Madam, I do not think it is very wicked of you to be moulded." The Baroness, horrified, attempted an explanation, but the girl would not listen to further arguments on the vexed questions of predestination and free will, and walked away, saying, "We are all very bad, very bad, but were so created."

When she grew up Caroline was permitted to arrange the amusements of the Palace, but even at an early age she participated in them, by her strength of will compelling her parents to allow her to do so. When she was sixteen a great ball was given to which the Duchess would not let her go, in spite of her pleadings. The ball had only just begun when a messenger came post-haste to the Duke and Duchess to say that the Princess had been taken seriously ill. The assembly at once broke up and the Duke and Duchess returned without delay to the apartment of their daughter, whom they found in bed, screaming. Pressed by her mother to say what was the matter with her, the girl said that it was impossible for her to conceal the cause of her agony. "I am in labour," she declared, "and entreat you, Madam, to send for an accoucheur immediately." When at length the accoucheur arrived the Princess wiped off the livid colouring from her face, and jumped out of bed, saying, with a hearty laugh, "Now, Madam, will you keep me another time from a ball?" This not very pleasant story is related by Frances William Wynn, who had it from one of the royal attendants-in-waiting, and it is here given for more than one reason. In the first place, upon this incident has been based a story that the Princess did, at the age of sixteen or thereabouts, give birth to a child; and, secondly, because it has been quoted in support of a theory that Caroline was mad. "Miss Kemble," Miss Wynn has written, "told me she had known . . a . . magistrate, formerly an officer in the Duke of Brunswick's Guards, who told her that it was the general opinion that in early youth the Princess had shown strong symptoms

of insanity, and he gave her this [the above] instance to prove his assertion." But surely the story shows nothing of the sort: it was merely the wish of a naughty girl to revenge herself on her parents, who had deprived her of a pleasure ardently desired. To the question of Caroline's sanity it will, however, be necessary later to return, though it may as well here be said, without further preamble, that in the opinion of the present writer there is no doubt that she was sane.

Of religious training Caroline had little or none, because it was decided not to give her any definite theological bias until it was settled whether she should marry a Roman Catholic or a Protestant; but her worldly education was not altogether neglected. Though obsequious biographers have declared that "there was scarcely an art with the practical part of which she was not in some degree acquainted," it is sufficient to believe that she spoke English, French, and German with more fluency than accuracy, that she played the harpsichord remarkably well for a princess, and was fond enough of music to enjoy the lively Italian school.

As a young girl she was, according to Sir John Thomas Stanley, who, scarcely older than herself, fell in love with her, beautiful—"the Caroline of fourteen years old, the lively, pretty Caroline, the girl my eyes had so often rested on, with light and powdered hair hanging in curls on her neck, the lips from which only sweet words seemed as if they could flow, with looks animated, and always simply and modestly dressed." When she was nineteen Mirabeau described her as "*tout à fait aimable, spirituelle, jolie,*

vive, sémillante," and there can be no question that she was an attractive young woman, with a marked individuality. She had at an early age most of the qualities that distinguished her in later days. A born fighter in her youth, she usually contrived to have her way. She wheedled her father, of whom in her heart she was afraid, and ruled her fond, foolish, weak mother without any disguise at all. Indeed, her will was so indomitable that the Duchess, with prophetic insight, once remarked, "Caroline is born for adversity; nothing would destroy her." But, as against this, a tender word or a gentle remonstrance would at any time subdue her. No one was more grateful for kindness, nor more susceptible. She had then, as after, a satirical turn of mind and an impish humour, and was overfond of talking—to which qualities were due much of the trouble that presently befel her. She hated the strict etiquette of courts, and from her mother she inherited a freedom of manner and speech that also was to assist in her undoing. She was kind, good-hearted, and generous. She visited charitable institutions, and from girlhood always evinced a particular attachment to children. A good-looking, healthy little boy or girl always attracted her attention. She would stop them in the street, ask who were their parents and where they lived, and presently go to see them. She had several young *protégés* at Brunswick, and her interest in them endeared her to the cottagers. The irony of fate dictated that her love of young children should be one of the first serious steps in her undoing.

CHAPTER II

LORD MALMESBURY'S MISSION TO THE COURT OF BRUNSWICK

1794

George, Prince of Wales—His early life—His marriage with Mrs. Fitzherbert—His *liaison* with Lady Jersey—His desperate financial position—He consents to marry in order to secure payment of his debts—The Queen suggests a bride—The Prince chooses his cousin, Caroline of Brunswick—He informs the King of his choice—The King's letter to Pitt—Caroline and her parents gladly acquiesce in the marriage—A scandalous statement refuted—Previous suitors for the hand of the Princess—An early love-affair—Caroline unhappy at her father's Court—Lord Malmesbury despatched to Brunswick—His instructions—His tact—His opinion of the Princess—The Prince of Wales's impatience—Extracts from Lord Malmesbury's Diary—Lord Malmesbury advises the Princess—The difficulties of his task—The Princess and suite leave Brunswick—Many delays *en route* for England—Letters from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, the Prince of Wales, and the Duke of Portland—Letter from the Prince of Wales to Lord Malmesbury—Mrs. Harcourt's favourable impression of the bride—Hanover—Stade—The voyage—Arrival in England.

GEORGE, PRINCE OF WALES, had in 1794 attained the age of thirty-two, and, in spite of many suggestions made to him at different times by his father, George III., he had declined to marry. His early life * gave point to Sheridan's remark that "The Prince was too much a ladies' man ever to

* A biography of George IV., entitled "The First Gentleman of Europe," by the present writer, was published some years ago.

become the man of one lady," for the list of his mistresses was long, and included persons so notorious as "Perdita" Robinson, Grace Dalrymple Elliott, and Mrs. Crouch. There was a pause in his wild career when, on December 15, 1785, he went through a ceremony of marriage with Mrs. Fitzherbert, to whom for a while he was devoted. Of her, as of every woman and man for whom he had an affection, he tired; and he abandoned her for the pleasures of a *liaison* with Frances, wife of the fourth Earl of Jersey. While this intimacy was still fervent, the Prince found his situation desperate. He owed enormous sums of money, and appealed to the King, who declined to assist him in any way, refusing even to sanction an appeal to Parliament for the discharge of the debts, unless he would consent to marry—which was now, in the interest of the succession, the more necessary since there seemed to be no prospect of the Duke and Duchess of York having any issue. Compliance with his father's will being the only possible way out of an awkward and untenable position, the Prince abruptly stated one day that he would do what was wished. "Well," said the King, "I will then, with your consent, send some confidential person to report on the Protestant Princess, of the stated age and character, qualified for such an alliance. Your wife must be a Protestant and a Princess: in all other respects your choice is unfettered." The Prince stated that he proposed to espouse his cousin, the Princess Caroline of Brunswick.

George III. to William Pitt

WEYMOUTH, *August* 24, 1794.

Agreeable to what I mentioned to Mr. Pitt before

I came here, I have this morning seen the Prince of Wales, who has acquainted me with his having broken off all connection with Mrs. Fitzherbert, and his desire of entering into a more creditable line of life by marrying; expressing at the same time that my niece, the Princess of Brunswick, may be the person. Undoubtedly she is the person who naturally must be most agreeable to *me*. I expressed my approbation of the idea, provided his plan was to lead a life that would make him appear respectable, and consequently render the Princess happy. He assured me that he perfectly coincided with me in opinion. I then said that, till Parliament assembled, no arrangement could be taken except my sounding my sister, that no idea of any other marriage may be entertained.

The Prince of Wales's choice was not approved by the Queen, who desired that the bride should be a daughter of her own house of Mecklenberg-Strelitz, and had suggested that Princess Louise, who afterwards became Queen of Prussia. The Princess Louise was younger and better-looking than the Princess Caroline, and probably it was for these reasons Lady Jersey encouraged in her lover a preference for the Princess Caroline, who was the less likely successfully to challenge her supremacy over the Prince.

When it became known to the Duke and Duchess of Brunswick that the Prince of Wales desired to marry their daughter they were very happy at this fine prospect, which came as a great surprise, for, as the Duchess subsequently told Lord Malmesbury, George III. had often expressed his dislike to the marriage of cousins-german. Caroline herself was delighted by the idea of being one day Queen of England. She was twenty-six, and, as in the eighteenth century that was

regarded as a mature age for a spinster, it was not probable that many more offers of marriage would fall to her lot; and, anyhow, there could be no suitor more eligible, at least from the point of view of rank, than him who now presented himself. In after-years it was declared that Caroline was unmarried at the age of twenty-six because her moral reputation was so bad that no prince would come forward to espouse her. When she was eighteen she had had a serious illness, which had occasioned her retirement from the Court, and in later days it was said that during these months she was delivered of a child. This tale probably arose from the desire to discredit her in those later days, when to do so was to find favour in the eyes of her husband, and it most likely had its origin in the trick she played upon her parents, already narrated in the previous chapter of this work. There is not a jot or tittle of evidence to support the discreditable story, and had it been true it is almost incredible that it would not have been discovered when all Europe was being ransacked, at the cost of a king's ransom, to gather material to show the Princess's unworthiness. This piece of scandal has recently been revived by Professor Clerici, who evidently believes it to be true, and hints that, because of it, "Caroline reached her twenty-sixth year, and so far none of the younger princes in the European courts had come forward to demand her hand in marriage." The latter part of this statement at least is inaccurate. If Caroline was unmarried it was entirely by her own action. She rejected the Prince of Orange and declined the overtures of, among others, the Prince who was afterwards Frederick William III. of Prussia; nor would

From an engraving, after a miniature.

PRINCESS CAROLINE OF BRUNSWICK.

she entertain the proposals of the handsome Prince George of Darmstadt, of whom she said to Lady Charlotte Campbell: "He turned all de women's heads except mine. I like him very much, but he was very perfide to me—a false, perfidious friend. It was he who was the lover of the late Queen of France, and he was the real father of the last Dauphin." The worst that can be said against Caroline was that she fell in love with a man of humble station—probably that officer of King George's German Legion, Major von Töbingen, who used to wear a large amethyst stud or pin which, according to Mary Frampton, was generally reported to have been presented to him by the Princess. Had there been known anything against Caroline's morals it would surely have come to the ears of that astute diplomatist, Lord Malmesbury,* when he was at Brunswick; but after his visit to that Court he stated explicitly that he had heard nothing detrimental to her moral character.

The Princess was not at this time happy at the Court of Brunswick, and when, some years later, Lady Charlotte Campbell asked her if she had left her native country with regret, she declared emphatically that this was not so. "I was sick, tired of it; but I was sorry to leave my father," she went on to explain. "I loved my father dearly, better nor any oder person. I will tell you, there is none affection more powerful than dat we feel for a good fader; but dere were some unlucky tings in our Court, which made my position difficult. My fader was most entirely attached to a lady for thirty years, who in fact was his mistress;

* James Harris (1746–1820), diplomatist, created Baron Malmesbury 1788, Earl of Malmesbury and Viscount Fitzharris 1800.

she was the beautifullest creature, and the cleverest; but, though my father continued to pay my mother all possible respect, my poor moder could not suffer this attachment; and de consequence was, I did not know what to do between them; when I was civil to the one, I was scolded by the other, and was very tired of being shuttle-cock between them." Her position was clearly very difficult, and she had not the tact with which it might have been possible to make it easier. A sturdy independence, not always wisely asserted, was one of the main traits of her character. No pressure was brought to bear upon her to accept the offer of the Prince of Wales. "My father said to me," she confided subsequently to Lady Charlotte Campbell, "if I would marry on the Continent, he never wished to get rid of me, or send me away; but if I was determined to marry, that this situation which presented itself seemed sent by Providence to my advantage, and he would not suffer me to slight it. So, as a drowning wretch catches at a straw, I caught at this crown and sceptre." The state of mind in which she consented to become Princess of Wales is further elucidated in a letter that she indited to a friend.

[Brunswick] *November* 28, 1794.

You are aware, my friend, of my destiny. I am about entering into a matrimonial alliance with my cousin, George Prince of Wales. His generosity I regard, and his letters bespeak a mind well cultivated and refined. My uncle is a good man, and I love him very much, but I feel that I shall never be inexpressibly happy. Estranged from my connections, my associations, my friends, all that I hold dear and valuable,

I am about entering on a permanent connection. I fear for the consequences. Yet I esteem and respect my intended husband, and I hope for great kindness and attention. But, ah me! I say sometimes, I cannot *now* love him with ardour. I am indifferent to my marriage, but not averse to it; I think I shall be happy, but I fear my joy will not be enthusiastic. The man of my choice I am debarred from possessing, and I resign myself to my destiny. I am attentively studying the English language; I am acquainted with it, but I wish to speak it with fluency. I shall strive to render my husband happy, and to interest him in my favour since the Fates will have it that I am to be Princess of Wales.

Lord Malmesbury, at Hanover, received on November 14, 1794, instructions to demand the Princess Caroline for the Prince of Wales. As the Envoy has been careful to point out, these instructions, which came from the King, were explicit, and gave him no discretionary power to tender advice or send information to his Majesty, the Prince of Wales, or the Government. He had merely to confine himself to presenting his credentials and making the request for the Princess's hand on behalf of his royal master. Unofficially, however, as will be seen from many passages in his correspondence, he exceeded his orders and did all he could to prepare the lady for the high position she was to occupy. Throughout, the tact with which he carried out this difficult task was worthy of the highest praise.

Lord Malmesbury arrived at Brunswick on November 20, and was lodged in a spacious palace, once the residence of the late Duke Frederick. The Duke received him pleasantly; the Duchess greeted him

with obvious pleasure—" nothing could be so open, so frank, and so unreserved as her manner, nor so perfectly good-natured and unaffected." Caroline met him with some embarrassment. " Pretty face—not expressive of softness—her figure not graceful—fine eyes—good hand—tolerable teeth, but going—fair hair and light eye-brows—good bust—short, with what the French call *des épaules impertinentes*. *Vastly* happy with her future expectations." So, in somewhat tradesman-like manner, the Envoy summed up the lady in his Diary; adding, a few days later, " Princess Caroline improves on acquaintance, is gay and cheerful, with good sense."

On Monday, December 1, Lord Malmesbury's credentials arrived, and the following Wednesday was fixed for the audience. Before he went to the presence-chamber, however, Major Hislop arrived from London bringing for Caroline the Prince of Wales's portrait, and for the Envoy a letter from his Royal Highness.

The Prince of Wales to Lord Malmesbury

My dear Lord, Carlton House, *23rd Nov.*, 1794.

I have sent Major Hislop back again to Brunswick, which I judged to be an advisable measure on many accounts, as more particularly, I think, he may prove, from his knowledge of the country, a very useful *avant-courrier* to you and your fair charge in your journey to the water's side. I have charged him with letters for the Duke, Duchess, and Princess, which I will beg of you to present to their different destinations, with every proper expression on my part, and to which no one can give so agreeable a *tournure* as yourself. I have likewise desired Major Hislop to give you an ample and thorough account of the steps

I have taken towards the expediting everything on this side of the water, as well as with my brother the Duke of York, to whom I have written also by Hislop; and as to what is now necessary to forward the completing everything at Brunswick, I must leave that to you, hoping that you will make every exertion possible to put the Princess in possession of her own home as near the 20th of the ensuing month as possible, for everything that can create delay at the present moment is bad on every account, but particularly so to the public, whose expectations have now been raised for some months, and would be quite outrageous, were it possible for them to perceive any impediment arising to what they have had their attention drawn to for so long a time, besides the suspense, and the naturally unpleasant feelings attendant upon suspense, which I myself must be subject to, and the very honourable, fair, and handsome manner in which the Duke and Duchess have both conducted themselves to me in this transaction; their having also in their last letters, both to the King and me, said that the Princess was ready to set off instantly; in short, all these reasons make it necessary for me, my dear Lord, to desire you to press your departure from Brunswick at as short a date as possible from the receipt of this letter. I have written fully to the Duchess upon the subject, and I doubt not but she will acquaint you with the contents of her letter, as I desire that you will have the goodness to do so by her, by shewing her, or acquainting her nearly of the purport of this letter.

I should think the travelling through Holland still practicable and safe, and if so, certainly preferable on every account; but, if not, we then must have recourse to the Elbe, which is certainly a very disagreeable alternative; however, whichever way the Princess is to come, I am clear it should be determined

upon instantly by you. I wish most certainly, if possible, that she should pass through Holland, if it is still upon the cards, therefore desire you to determine if you can upon that. We cannot tell on this side of the water as well as you can, or rather as Hislop can, after his communication with the Duke of York; and you will then be able, when you have seen the Major, and know what has passed between him and the Duke, to fix your plan *immediately, and so immediately put it into execution.* According to our calculation, Hislop ought to be at Brunswick the 8th; I therefore trust that by the 16th I shall from you, my dear Lord, receive an account of your having fixed the day of your departure, and not only of the probability, but indeed of the certainty of your being many miles on your journey. There are some other particular circumstances which might not be so proper or so safe to commit to paper, which I have entrusted Major Hislop with, and which he will communicate by word of mouth to you. I will not detain you, my dear Lord, any longer, except to assure you how happy I was in having this opportunity of testifying the very sincere regard I entertain for you, as well as those sentiments with which I remain, etc.

GEORGE P.

This letter, indicative of the Prince of Wales's impatience to see his bride, placed Lord Malmesbury in a quandary. "I am here under the *King's* immediate command, and cannot but by his especial order," he wrote privately to the Duke of Portland; but he was naturally anxious to comply so far as possible with his Royal Highness's wish. The Prince desired that Princess Caroline should arrive in London on December 20, which was clearly impossible; but Lord Malmesbury, after some reflection, told Major

Hislop that he would set out with her Royal Highness on the 11th, if before that date he had received intelligence that the fleet which was to act as escort had sailed from England.

The following extracts from Lord Malmesbury's Diary explain the situation far better than any mere paraphrase of them, and they also give a clear insight into the opinion he formed of the Princess Caroline.

Friday, Dec. 5, 1794.

After dinner he [the Duke] held a very long and very sensible discourse with me about the Princess Caroline; and here, where he was not on his guard, and where he laid aside his *finesse* and suspicion, he appeared in all his lustre. He entered fully into her future situation—was perfectly aware of the character of the Prince, and of the inconveniences that would result, almost with equal ill effect, either from his liking the Princess too much or too little. . . . He said of his daughter, "*Elle n'est pas bête, mais elle n'a pas de jugement—elle a été élevée sévèrement, et il le falloit.*" The Duke requested me to recommend to her discretion not to *ask questions*, and, above all, not to be free in giving opinions of persons and things aloud; and he hinted delicately, but very pointedly, at the free and unreserved manners of the Duchess, who at times is certainly apt to forget her audience. He desired me to advise her never to show any jealousy of the Prince; and that, if he had any *goûts*, not to notice them. He said he had written her all this *in German*, but that enforced by me, it would come with double effect.

Saturday, Dec. 6, 1794.

Mlle Hertzfeldt repeats to me what the Duke had before said—stated the necessity of being very

strict with the Princess Caroline—that she was not clever, or ill-disposed, but of a temper easily wrought on, and had *no tact.* She said my advice would do more good than the Duke's, as although she [Caroline] respected him, she also feared him, and considered him as a severe rather than an affectionate father—that she had *no* respect for her mother, and was inattentive to her when she dared. I lead the Princess Caroline to supper, and am placed between her and the Duchess; her conversation very right: she entreats me also to guide and direct her. I recommend perfect silence on *all* subjects for six months after her arrival.

Sunday, Dec. 7, 1794.

Before the concert another long conversation with the Duke about his daughter. He extremely anxious about her doing right; said he had been with her for two hours in the morning—that he wished to make her feel that the high situation in which she was going to be placed, was not simply one of amusement and enjoyment; that it had its duties, and those perhaps difficult and hard to fulfil. He again earnestly entreated me to be her adviser, not to forsake her when in England; that he was more afraid of what would happen there than here; that he dreaded the Prince's habits. He said the Princess had not taken amiss what I said to her; she had repeated it to him, and he thanked me for it. Lady Elizabeth Eden, whom I carried home from Court, said that Lady [Jersey] was very well with the Queen; that she went frequently to Windsor, and appeared as a sort of favourite. This, if true, most strange, and bodes no good. Sat next Princess Caroline at supper; I advise her to avoid familiarity, to have no *confidantes,* to avoid giving any opinion; to approve, but not to admire excessively; to be perfectly silent on politics and party; to be very

attentive and respectful to the Queen; to endeavour, at all events, to be well with her. She takes all this well; she was at times in tears, but on account of having taken leave of some of her old acquaintance.

Tuesday, Dec. 9, 1794.

Princess Caroline recommends ——'s son. I take this opportunity of requesting her not to make any promise, or to attend to any request made her; to refer them all, if she pleased, to *me*, but to say to all invariably that she had laid it down as a rule to ask for nothing on her arrival in England, and never on any account to meddle with the distribution of offices, or interfere on any account in anything which bore reference to public affairs. She approved what I said; to which I added that, if amongst the number of applications made to her, there was any one she felt really and sincerely interested about, if she would mention it to me I would make a point of recommending it when in England; but that this should not be told to the requiring person, and the event, when it happened, not furnish an example for further application. This, to which she acquiesced most readily, gave me an opportunity to recommend her to make no distinction of party, except that made by the King and Queen, never to talk politics, or allow them to be talked to her, and never on any account to give any other opinion on public and political subjects, but such as was expressive of her anxiety for the public good. She asked me about Lady [Jersey], appeared to suppose her an *intriguante*, but not to know of any partiality or connection between her and the Prince. I said that in regard to Lady [Jersey] she and all her other ladies would frame their conduct towards her by hers towards them; that I humbly advised that this should not be familiar or too easy, but that it might be affable without forgetting she was Princess of Wales; that she

should never listen to them whenever they attempted anything like a *commerage*, and never allow them to appear to influence her opinion by theirs. She said she wished to be popular, and was afraid I recommended too much reserve; that probably I thought her too prone *à se livrer*. I made a bow. She said, "Tell me freely." I said, "I did"; that it was an amiable quality, but one which could not in her high situation be given way to without great risk; that, as to popularity, it never was attained by *familiarity*; that it could only belong to respect, and was to be acquired by a just mixture of dignity and affability. I quoted the Queen as a model in this respect. The Princess said she was afraid of the Queen—she was sure she would be jealous of her and do her harm. I replied that, for this reason, it was of the last consequence to be attentive towards her, to be always on her guard, and never to fail in any exterior mark of respect towards her, or to let drop an inconsiderate word before her. She took all this in good part, and desired me to continue to be her *mentor* after she got to England, as well as now. She said of her own accord: "I am determined never to appear jealous. I know the Prince is *léger*, and am prepared on this point." I said I did not believe she would have any occasion to exercise this very wise resolution, which I commended highly, and entreated her, if she saw any symptoms of a *goût* in the Prince, or if any of the women about her should, under the love of fishing in troubled waters, endeavour to excite a jealousy in her mind, on no account to allow it to manifest itself; that reproaches and sourness never reclaimed anybody; that it only served as an advantageous contrast to the contrary qualities in the rival; and that the surest way of recovering a tottering affection was softness, enduring, and caresses; that I knew enough of the Prince to be quite sure he could not withstand such a conduct,

From a mezzotint engraving by Caroline Watson, after a painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds, P.R.A.

JAMES HARRIS, EARL OF MALMESBURY.

while a contrary one would *probably* make him disagreeable and peevish, and certainly force him to be false and dissembling.

Wednesday, Dec. 10, 1794.

Concert at Court—Madlle Hertzfeldt takes me aside, and says nearly these words : "*Je vous conjure, faites que le Prince fasse mener, au commencement, une vie retirée à la Princesse. Elle a toujours été très gênée et très observée, et il le falloit ainsi. Si elle se trouve tout à coup dans le monde sans restriction aucune, elle ne marchera pas à pas égaux. Elle n'a pas le cœur dépravé—elle n'a jamais rien fait de mauvais, mais la parole en elle devance toujours la pensée ; elle se livre à ceux à qui elle parle sans réserve, et de là il ensuit (même dans cette petite cour) qu'on lui prête des sens et des intentions qui ne lui ont jamais appartenus—que ne sera-t-il pas en Angleterre?—ou elle sera entourée de femmes adroites et intriguantes (à qu'on dit) auxquelles elle se livrera à corps perdu (si le Prince permet qu'elle mène la vie dissipée de Londres), et qui placeront dans sa bouche tel propos qu'elles voudront, puisqu'elle parlera elle même sans savoir ce qu'elle dit. De plus, elle a beaucoup de vanité, et, quoique pas sans esprit,* avec peu de fond—*la tête lui tournera si on la caresse et la flatte trop ou si le Prince la gâte ; et il est tout aussi essentiel qu'elle le craigne que qu'elle l'aime. Il faut absolument qu'il la tienne* serrée, *qu'il se fasse respecter, sans quoi* elle s'égarera. *Je sais* [*continua-t-elle*] *que vous ne me compromettrez pas, je vous parle comme à mon vieux ami. Je suis attachée cœur et âme au Duc. Je me suis dévouée à lui, je me suis perdue pour lui. C'est le bien de sa famille que je veux. Il sera le plus malheureux des hommes si cette fille ne réussît pas mieux que son aînée. Je vous répète, elle n'a jamais rien fait de mauvais, mais elle est sans jugement et on l'a jugée à l'avenant.*

Je crains [*dit Madlle Hertzfeldt*] *la Reine. La Duchesse ici, qui passe sa vie à penser tout haut, ou à ne jamais penser du tout, n'aime pas la Reine, et elle en a trop parlé à sa fille. Cependant son bonheur dépend d'être bien avec elle, et, pour Dieu, répétez-lui toujours cette maxime que vous avez déjà plus d'une fois recommandée. Elle vous écoute. Elle trouve que vous parlez raison d'une manière gaie, et vous ferez bien plus d'impression sur elle que son père, qu'elle craint trop; ou que sa mère qu'elle ne craint pas du tout.*" I had not time to reply to this, as I was called away to cards with the Duchess.*

Masquerade—I walked with the Princess Caroline, and had a very long conversation with her. I endeavour not to mix up much serious matter at such a place, but whenever I found her inclined to give way too much to the temper of the entertainment, and to get over-cheerful and *too mixing*, I endeavour to bring her back by becoming serious and respectful.

When we returned to the "Balcon" (the masquerade was in the Opera-house,) she entered, of her own accord, into the kind of life she was to lead in England, and was very inquisitive about it. I said it would depend very much on her; that I could have no share in settling it, but that my wish was, that in private she might enjoy every ease and comfort belonging to domestic happiness, but that when she appeared abroad she should always appear as Princess of Wales,

* Lord Malmesbury listened to the advice of Madame de Hertzfeldt, an old Berlin acquaintance, but he would not permit others to discuss the Princess with him. When Madame de Waggenheim asked him, in speaking of the Princess, how he found "*la petite*," and added, "*Quoique assez âgée, son éducation n'est pas encore finie*," he replied effectively: "*Que je voyais qu'à un âge bien plus avancé que celui* de son Altesse Royale, *la bonne éducation dont vous parlez n'étoit pas toujours commencée.*"

surrounded by all that "*appareil* and etiquette" due to her elevated situation. She asked me what were the Queen's drawing-room days. I said, Thursday and Sunday after church, which the King and Queen never missed; and I added that I hoped most ardently she would follow their example, and never, on any account, miss Divine Service on that day. "Does the Prince go to church?" she asked me. I replied, she would make him go; it was one of many advantages he would derive from changing his situation. "But if he does not like it?" "Why, then, your Royal Highness must go without him, and tell him that the fulfilling regularly and exactly this duty can alone enable you to perform exactly and regularly those you owe him —this cannot but please him, and will, in the end, induce him also to go to church." The Princess said mine was a very serious remark for a masquerade. I begged her pardon, and said it was, in fact, a more cheerful one than the most dissipated one I could have made, since it contained nothing *triste* in itself, and would infallibly lead to everything that was pleasant. She caught my idea with great quickness, and the last part of our conversation was very satisfactory, as I felt I had done what I wished and set her mind on thinking of the *drawbacks* of her situation, as well as of its "*agrémens*," and impressed it with the idea that, in the order of society, those of a very high rank have a price to pay for it, and that the life of a Princess of Wales is not to be one of all pleasure, dissipation, and enjoyment; that the great and conspicuous advantages belonging to it must necessarily be purchased by considerable sacrifices, and can only be preserved and kept up by a continual repetition of these sacrifices.

Monday, Dec. 15, 1794.

Much conversation before dinner with Princess Caroline—She very inquisitive about what she is to

do to please—my constant answer, to *commune with herself*, to be very circumspect, and to think always before she speaks.

Tuesday, Dec. 16, 1794.

The Princess Caroline has no *fonds*, no fixed character, a light and a flighty mind, but meaning well and well-disposed, and my eternal theme to her is, *to think before she speaks, to recollect herself*. She says she wishes to be *loved* by the people; this, I assure her, can only be obtained by making herself respected and *rare*; that the sentiment of being *loved* by the people is a mistaken one—that sentiment can only be given to a few, to a narrow circle of those we see every day—that a nation at large can only respect and honour a great princess, and it is, in fact, these feelings that are falsely denominated *the love of a nation*: they are not to be procured as the good-will of individuals is, by pleasant openness and free communication, but by a strict attention to appearances—by never going below the high rank in which a princess is placed, either in language or manners—by mixing dignity and affability which, without it, becomes familiarity, and levels all distinction.

The difficulties of Lord Malmesbury's task were very apparent to him. A man less conscientious might have done merely what was ordained by the instructions, but he regarded it as his duty to do the best he could for the Princess Caroline. At the same time, while giving advice that he was well aware could not be palatable to the recipient, he had to contrive to steer a course that should not offend her. Though all went well enough, he was ever apprehensive that he and his pupil might not remain on good terms. "Preached my constant theme: discretion, reserve, no familiarity,

and less talking," he noted in his Diary on December 20. "All this she *still* takes well, but at the long run it must displease." That to the end she took his admonitions in the right way, and expressed the hope that he might be appointed her Lord Chamberlain naturally prejudiced him somewhat in her favour. As he told Sir Brook Boothby, he regretted (as did the Duke and Mlle de Hertzfeldt) the Princess's want of reflection and substance," but thought that with a steady man she would do vastly well, but with one of a different description there are great risks." Now, with the greatest good-will in the world and the deepest loyalty, it was impossible to regard the Prince of Wales as a steady man, albeit at this period perhaps no one knew how utterly vile he was; and Lord Malmesbury only shared the general opinion of being exceedingly doubtful as to the result of the marriage. No woman ever lived to whom the Prince, by the inherent defects of his character, could have been faithful: the last person in the world likely to bind him to her side was one who had the virtues and faults of Caroline. Notwithstanding the misgivings of all concerned, the arrangements proceeded in all amity, and there was only one rift in the lute. The Duke desired that his daughter should be accompanied by Mlle Rosenzweig, her secretary; but to this the Prince of Wales, for what reason has never transpired, would not consent, in spite of the Duke's urgent solicitations. Eventually the Duke gave way as graciously as he could, after explaining to Lord Malmesbury that the only reason he had been so insistent was because his daughter wrote very badly and spelt even worse, and he was desirous that this should not appear. Those who have

perused Caroline's correspondence will agree that her father's wish that she should have a competent and trustworthy amanuensis was eminently reasonable.

From Lord Malmesbury's Diary

Sunday, Dec. 28, 1794.

At dinner I found the Duchess and Princess alarmed, agitated, and uneasy at an anonymous letter from England, abusing the Prince, and warning them in the most exaggerated terms against Lady [Jersey], who is represented as the worst and most dangerous of profligate women. The Duchess, with her usual indiscretion, had shewn this to the Princess, and mentioned it to everybody. I was quite angry with her, and could not avoid expressing my concern, first at paying *any* attention to an anonymous letter, and, secondly, at being so very imprudent as to bruit about its contents. The Princess soon recovered from it, but the Duchess harped on it all day. The Duke, on being acquainted with it, thought as I did, but was more uneasy about it than he ought. On his examining the letter, he assured me it came from England—(I suspected it the work of some of the partisans of *Madlle Rosenzweig*, on her being refused)—and that the person who wrote it wrote in the character of a man, not a woman, and said he was in the daily society of Carlton House. Madlle Hertzfeldt again talks to me as before about the Princess Caroline: "*Il faut la gouverner par la peur, par la terreur même. Elle s'émancipera si on n'y prend pas garde—mais si on la veille soigneusement et sévèrement elle se conduira bien.*"

The King of England, in a letter to the Duchess, says, "*Qu'il espère que sa nièce n'aura pas trop de vivacité, et qu'elle menera une vie sédentaire et retirée.*" These words shock Princess Caroline, to whom the Duchess very foolishly reads the letter.

Princesse Abbesse importunately civil and *coming*, and plagues me with her attentions and affectations of wit and cleverness, and concern at our departure. Princess Caroline shews me the anonymous letter about Lady [Jersey], evidently written by some disappointed milliner or angry maid-servant, and deserving no attention; I am surprised the Duke afforded it any. Aimed at Lady [Jersey]; its object to frighten the Princess with the idea that she would lead her into an affair of gallantry, and be ready to be convenient on such an occasion. This did *not* frighten the Princess, although it did the Duke and Duchess; and on my perceiving this, I told her Lady [Jersey] would be more cautious than to risk an audacious measure; and that, besides, it was *death* to presume to approach a Princess of Wales, and no man would be daring enough to think of it. She asked me whether I was in earnest. I said such was our law; that anybody who presumed to *love* her was guilty of *high treason*, and punished with *death* if she was weak enough to listen to him: so also would *she*. This startled her.

Saturday, Jan. 10, 1795.

On summing up Princess Caroline's character today, it came out to my mind to be, that she has quick parts, without a sound or distinguishing understanding; that she has a ready conception, but no judgment; caught by the first impression, led by the first impulse; turned away by appearances or *enjouement;* loving to talk, and prone to confide and make missish friendships that last twenty-four hours. Some natural, but no acquired morality, and no strong innate notions of its value and necessity; warm feelings and nothing to counterbalance them; great good humour and much good nature—no appearance of caprice—rather quick and *vive*, but not a grain of rancour. From her habits, from the life she was allowed and even compelled

to live, forced to dissemble; fond of gossiping, and this strengthened greatly by the example of her good mother, who is all curiosity and inquisitiveness, and who has no notion of not gratifying this desire at any price. In short, the Princess in the hands of a steady and sensible man would probably turn out well, but where it is likely she will find faults perfectly analogous to her own, she will fail. She has no governing powers, although her mind is *physically* strong. She has her father's courage, but it is to her (as to him) of no avail. *He* wants mental decision, *she* character and tact.

In those days travelling was never easy even for Royalty, and Lord Malmesbury, who was responsible for the safety of the Princess of Wales, was well aware that the most arduous part of his duty was by no means over when on December 30 he set out from Brunswick, with the Princess, who was accompanied by the Duchess and a numerous suite. The difficulties began at the outset of the journey. The royal party reached Osnaburg on New Year's Day, and where Lord Malmesbury received a despatch from Lord St. Helens announcing that, in consequence of the war, Commodore "Jack" Payne's squadron, which had been sent to convey her Royal Highness, had returned to England, and advising Lord Malmesbury to alter his route so as to do away with the necessity of entering Holland.

Lord Malmesbury to Lord Grenville

OSNABRÜCK, *4th Jan.*, 1795.

I have acted on the present very anxious and distressing occasion, to the best of my judgment; were I travelling with my wife and children, I should have acted as I have now done. The frost is so intense,

and wears every appearance of being so permanent, that I cannot but consider Holland as in the most imminent danger. It would be blameable in the extreme were I to conduct the Princess into that country at such a moment, and without the certainty of having a fleet to convey her out of it. I hope all the circumstances will be taken into consideration, and not the single one of the road being safe so far as Utrecht. I have no doubt about this, but my doubts are on the risks and uneasiness to which the Princess will be exposed when she is there, and during the remainder of her stay and journey in that country. If we have a thaw, or if I was sure Commodore Payne was at the Texel, I should not demur; but neither is likely, and I cannot but fear that it will be found that the only safe and secure mode of conveying the Princess to England is by Stade, and that, to do this, we must wait till the mouth of the Elbe is free from ice.

On any other occasion I should certainly not make *extreme* prudence and precaution the governing principle of my conduct; but on this I ought not to have any other. My duty is to arrive *safe*, and not to sacrifice this circumstance to the wish of arriving *soon*. I hope this will be admitted and understood as the only rule by which I ought to act.

Lord Malmesbury to the Prince of Wales

Osnabrück, *4th Jan.*, 1795.

In order to lose no time in despatching the messenger who is charged with this letter for your Royal Highness, I take the liberty of enclosing a copy of the despatch I have written by him this day to Lord Grenville, in which I have stated fully and distinctly the different motives on which I have grounded my conduct. I am most anxious that it should have your Royal

Highness's approbation in a measure where the trust was so very important, and where so much was left to my own judgment. I could not conceive a safer rule to go by than to place myself in a similar situation to that in which I now stand with my children and family, and, had this been the case, I certainly should have acted as I now have done. My apprehensions for Holland are very great, and the same easterly wind that produces the frost also keeps the fleet from arriving at the Texel; and, were I to undertake to recommend their Royal Highnesses to go as far as Utrecht, I should expose them to all the uneasiness and disquietude attendant on an invaded country, probably to insult, and possibly to danger in the extreme, since it would almost be as difficult to retrograde, or regain a place of security on this side, as to attempt to cross the sea.

Till, therefore, I can be satisfied that the fleet is at the Texel, and that the attempts of the enemy to penetrate into Holland on the side of Goree or by the Moerdyk (should it be frozen, as it probably is) have failed, I shall not feel myself justified in my own mind, or acting up to the sense of the very high duty reposed on me, were I to move forward. The Princess Caroline, and the Duchess of Brunswick, whose pleasure and commands I have taken on this point, agree in this decision. The first is too anxious to get safe to England, and expects too much happiness there to wish to leave anything to chance, and this consideration supersedes her extreme impatience to be at her journey's end.

I expect to-morrow or next day to receive fresh intelligence from Lord St. Helens, and your Royal Highness may be assured that not a minute shall be lost, and nothing of any kind delay our journey, but the considerations I have already mentioned, which are of a nature that cannot be too much attended to.

I trust, by making them the rule of my conduct, I shall have acted in conformity to your Royal Highness's pleasure.

Lord Malmesbury to the Prince of Wales

DELDEN, *Friday, Jan. 9th*, 1795.

Their Royal Highnesses were within a few leagues of Deventer, when I was met by one of the messengers I had sent forward, who brought me a letter from Lord St. Helens written from the headquarters this morning, saying that the French had again crossed the Waal in considerable force; that there had been an affair yesterday in which they had *not* been driven back, and that it was expected they would renew the attack to-day with increased numbers. He gave it me as his decided opinion, and as one in which General Harcourt concurs, that I must on *no account come into Holland*, but return immediately with the Princess to Osnabrück. This, Sir, as soon as I could read the letter, I directly recommended to them to do, and on Sunday we shall again be at that town where I have written to Lord Grenville word that I shall remain till I know His Majesty's pleasure. I hope your Royal Highness will not disapprove my having come to this resolution. Nothing short of a miracle can save Holland; it will either be conquered or capitulate, and in either case, it would be impossible to think of exposing the Princess to pass through it. I have as yet, too, no account whatever of the arrival of the squadron at Texel, and without that certainty, nothing could justify my attempting to continue the route in the way originally proposed.

Osnabrück is as near Stade as it is to the Texel, and in case that port should be chosen, which I much fear must be the case, we cannot remain at a better or more becoming place.

It is impossible for me to describe to your Royal Highness how much I am hurt and vexed at these very unpleasant delays; but it is a great alleviation to my feelings to observe the great good-humour with which the Princess submits to them; at the same time that I can assure you, Sir, she feels them as strongly as if she had already the pleasure of knowing your Royal Highness.

I shall write again very soon, but I am at present so hurried to get away my messenger, whilst he can yet pass with impunity through Holland, that I fear what I write to-day will be very incorrect.

I am most anxious to know that your Royal Highness does not disapprove of my conduct. I have left nothing untried to bring the Princess both *soon and safe* to England, but when one of the two is to be given up, I should be very unfit for the high trust in me if I hesitated. Mr. Elliot is so good as to promise me to go to the Texel, under chance of finding Commodore Payne arrived, and to explain to him our situation. I have likewise desired him to send on Mr. Anthony St. Leger to me through Holland, which, for a single man, is a practicable road, as I shall want very much his aid and assistance. I hope this will not be blamed by your Royal Highness.

Lord Malmesbury to the Duke of Portland

HANOVER, *27th Jan.*, 1795.

As it is very difficult for me to be *quite* explicit in an official letter, as to *all* the reasons which determined me to bring the Princess Caroline back as far as this place, and to advise Her Royal Highness to remain at it till such time as I can receive His Majesty's further orders, allow me to mention them to you more fully in a private letter, and to entreat your Grace to make such use of them as your kindness for me will, I am

sure, prompt you to do, in case my conduct, on this occasion, may seem reprehensible, and not sufficiently justified by what I have mentioned in my despatch of to-day. The proximity and character of the enemy, the probability of their coming on towards Westphalia, the establishment of the hospital, and the certainty that our army would soon fall back behind the Ems, would of themselves, I trust, be considered sufficient reason for removing the Princess from Osnabrück; but, in addition to these, the arrival of Count D'Artois, who, when we left it, was already as far as Bentheim on the road with his suite, operated very decidedly on my opinion; for, although I am very far from attributing either to him, or those who attend him, all those vices and dangerous follies which it was said belonged to them in their days of prosperity, yet I felt it highly improper that the Princess of Wales, and a fugitive French Prince, should remain in the same place; and I am sure the inconveniences which would have resulted from it cannot escape your observation.

I confess, also, I had a repugnance at putting His Royal Highness the Duke of York * to so considerable an expense as that of maintaining, for any length of time, so numerous a Court as we formed; for, although nothing could be more attentive than the conduct of his household and Ministers there, and although I know enough of the Duke's liberal temper of mind to be sure this would not a moment weigh with him, yet it *did* not become me to forget it, and it ought to and did influence my conduct. These reasons for leaving Osnabrück will, I hope, be considered as valid ones. Two places remained to which I could conduct the Princess, either Brunswick or this. In regard to the first, I have, in my public letter, stated that (considered as a measure) I knew it would be unpleasant

* The Duke of York was Bishop of Osnaburg.

to the Duke; and the carrying a Princess, circumstanced as the Princess Caroline is, back to her own Court, after the ceremonies which had passed, and she had formally taken leave of it, appeared to me one which would be liable to many disagreeable animadversions and remarks. Writing to your Grace, confidentially, I can add that many other very powerful objections occurred to me against placing Her Royal Highness again in the situation in which she stood at Brunswick. It was one perfectly dissimilar to that she is about to fill; it was a subordinate one, and of great restraint, and where her mind had not fair play; where it never could act for itself, where it was governed severely, not guided gently; where she had formed and contracted habits and manners, and where the ladies, who, never expecting to see the Princess called up to the high station she is now going to assume, had allowed themselves towards her habits of familiarity and easy intimacy always pernicious in their effects from the gossiping to which they lead, and very different from that respectful and distant attention she is entitled to, which certainly will be shewn her in England, and to which I have it very much at heart she should get accustomed, and feel as right and indispensable before she arrives there.

Everything that I have taken the liberty to say has gone to this point, as the one which has been the least attended to in her education; for, in my judgment, the happiness of the Prince, as well as her own, I will even add, that of the country, rest in a great measure, in times like these, in her feeling properly the dignity of her high situation, and acting up to it, and in understanding, that if this is painful to her, it is the price she is to pay for its pre-eminence. Her own good sense, of which she really and truly has a considerable share, has induced her to listen to this advice, and to feel its consequence; and since we

have left Brunswick, the manner in which she has conducted herself towards those who have come to pay their court to her, has been the most becoming possible. To carry her back there would be to place Her Royal Highness in a position where she could not follow it up, and where she necessarily must resume her former customs and behaviour, although perfectly unexceptionable and innocent, are by no means those calculated for the rank of Princess of Wales. Hanover is the contrary of all this. The manners of the Court are uncommonly proper and decorous; those who compose it are of a most respectable character, and before I brought the Princess here, I was certain she would be received in a way she had never yet been used to, and one which would give those impressions I so anxiously wish her to receive. My expectations have been fully justified. The Princess Caroline is here received and treated exactly as a Princess of Wales Elect ought to be treated; and I am convinced that, all things considered, the delay in our arrival is a most fortunate circumstance, and that the two months or more which will elapse from the time of our leaving Brunswick till that of our landing in England, will form and shape the Princess's mind and manners to her situation, and give her a more exact sense of it, than if the journey from the Palace at Brunswick to Carlton House had been performed with all the expedition we originally wished for.

I have been insensibly led to say more on the subject than was my intention when I began my letter, which was simply to explain the motives of my conduct.

The Prince of Wales to Lord Malmesbury

CARLTON HOUSE, *21st Feb.*, 1795.

I do myself the pleasure of acknowledging the receipt of three letters I received on the 19th from

your Lordship, two dated the 15th and 18th January, the other I suppose written on a subsequent day, but bearing no date. Accept my best thanks for every step that you have taken, as, to the best of my judgment, nothing can have been more consistent in point of prudence and propriety, and, indeed, more consonant to my wishes, than your conduct appears to me to have been throughout this very tedious and trying Embassy. The accounts you are so good as to give me of the temper and resignation with which the Princess is so good as to bear with the interruptions in her journey, is more than I fancy any one would venture to say for me from hence, as I assure you, all the mismanagement, procrastinations and difficulties that I have met with in the conduct of this business on this side of the water have totally put patience (a virtue you well know that our family in general are not much endowed with) out of the question. On account of the unfortunate position of affairs on the Continent, I have judged it necessary, in order to bring the Princess over in the most expeditious, as well as the safest mode, to contrive she should be in a manner *smuggled* over into this country; this meets entirely with His Majesty's approbation, and the plan to be pursued is this. The yachts, as well as the ladies and gentlemen who were to have had the honour of attending the Princess, to remain under expectation of receiving sailing orders hourly. The convoy destined originally to attend upon the Princess, to proceed to sea with the rest of the fleet and transports going to fetch the remains of our army from the Continent. By which means they will endeavour to make Stade, having detached themselves from the rest of the fleet at a certain latitude. Finding themselves there, to take you and your charge aboard, before it is suspected even on this side of the water that such a plan is in agitation. Not thinking it

proper that the Princess should come without a lady, Mrs. Harcourt is ordered to attend her and her own ladies, Lady Jersey, and Mrs. Aston, who were to have sailed in the yachts to have fetched her over, will be ready to receive her at the water-side on her landing, together with Clermont and the rest of her suite. The general and universal mortification occasioned by the fleet's being obliged to put back, made us doubly anxious by every means that human foresight can devise to prevent a similar unpleasant *contretemps* happening again ; and we therefore think, in addition to this motive, that by retaining the yachts and attendants here we shall prevent entirely our enemies from having the smallest intimation of our having in present and immediate contemplation the scheme of the Princess's crossing.

I hope you will make this plan acceptable to the Princess as well as the Duchess, as you must be well acquainted with my impatience ; and beg you will assure them both that there is no sort of respect, state, and attention that shall not be shown the Princess the moment she sets her foot on our dear little island. I am convinced you will heartily concur with me in my anxious endeavours through this, or even any other means, to bring your voyage to as expeditious and happy a termination as possible. I write to the Duchess of Brunswick by the same courier, which letters you will have the goodness to deliver into her hands yourself. I cannot help once more reiterating my thanks to you, my dear Lord, for your judgment and caution through all these late occurrences, etc.

At the Bishop's Palace at Hanover the Princess perforce remained for some weeks, reading English for some hours every day, and taking advantage of every opportunity that offered to learn something

about the manners and customs of her adopted country. Lord Malmesbury, for his part, utilised the unexpected delay to continue his advice. Not the most awkward part of his self-imposed duty was to impress upon her the necessity of showing greater respect for her person.

From Lord Malmesbury's Diary

Sunday, March 1, 1795.

I had frequent opportunity of confirming what I have already said of the Princess Caroline. If she can get the better of a gossiping habit, of a desire to appear *très fine*, and of knowing what passes in the minds of those around, and of overhearing and understanding their secrets, and of *talking* about them, she will do very well; but this is very difficult. I make it the daily object of my conversation to urge upon her never to *stoop* to *private* concerns, *de vivre et laisser vivre*, to avoid remarks, and not to care what passes in society and in her neighbour's house—"*Uno tonto mas en su casa, que uno sabio en la de ageno*"—a very excellent Spanish proverb. . . . I also took frequent opportunities of speaking very *seriously* to the Princess Caroline, on her not showing due respect to the Duchess her mother, of her sneering and slighting her; and on this point I went perhaps beyond the bounds of *decorum*, as it appeared to me of the last consequence to make her feel, in the most strong manner, the necessity of her attending to *these sort of duties*. She *at first* took it amiss, but very soon after admitted the truth of what I said and observed.

Friday, March 6, 1795.

I had two conversations with the Princess Caroline.

PRINCESS CAROLINE OF BRUNSWICK, [?]
circa 1795.

One on the toilette, on cleanliness, and on delicacy of speaking. On these points I endeavoured, as far as was possible for a *man*, to inculcate the necessity of great and nice attention to every part of dress, as well as to what was hid as to what was seen. (I knew she wore coarse petticoats, coarse shifts, and thread stockings, and these never well washed, or changed often enough.) I observed that a long toilette was necessary, and gave her no credit for boasting that hers was a "*short*" one. What I could not say myself on this point, I got said through women; through Madame Busche, and afterwards through Mrs. Harcourt. It is remarkable how amazingly on this point her education has been neglected, and how much her mother, although an Englishwoman, was inattentive to it.

Mrs. Harcourt, who had come from England to act as Lady-in-waiting to the Princess, was very much more favourably impressed by her Royal Highness than Lord Malmesbury, who, from the position in which he was placed, was critical first and appreciative after. "I am sure the Prince will love her, she is so affectionate, and he is so good-natured, and her desire to please is very engaging. In looks . . . there is some resemblance, in miniature, to what Mrs. Fitzherbert was when young. She is all openness of heart, and has not a shadow of pride. . . . She seems of a cheerful temper, perfectly void of art or design." Thus Mrs. Harcourt in a letter, preserved in the unpublished annals of the Harcourt family. "I think the more you see of the Princess the more you will like her, as I do," she said after the acquaintance had lasted some weeks—trying weeks, too, for a Princess held up on the way to take up her new position, a

severe test that her Royal Highness bore well even in Lord Malmesbury's opinion, for he wrote to the Prince of Wales that, while the impatience to get away from Hanover was undoubtedly her governing feeling, her good-humour and cheerfulness were remarkable. The royal party perforce remained at Hanover until March 24, when it set out for Stade, where Mrs. Hervey Aston and Mrs. St. Leger met the Princess. On Saturday, the 28th, her Royal Highness, accompanied by her suite, embarked on the *Jupiter*, which the next day cleared the Elbe. It may be mentioned, as a coincidence, that a young midshipman named Doyle who helped her Royal Highness aboard, was, twenty-six years later, commander of the vessel which carried her remains across the Channel for interment at Brunswick. Everything went well on the voyage, the Princess being quite well and entirely untroubled about the French privateers that were not far away. "I see our English captains are enchanted with her," Mrs. Harcourt wrote. "Her sweet temper and affability of manners has charmed and delighted every one; and all the officers of the ship declare they should have had more trouble with any London lady than her Royal Highness has given. She is always contented and always in good humour, and shows such pleasant, unaffected joy at the idea of her prospect in life that it does one's heart good to see any one so happy." After three days at sea the *Jupiter*, when about six leagues off Yarmouth, ran into a fog-bank and was compelled to lie to until the early morning of the next day, Friday, April 4. Harwich was passed that afternoon, and at six o'clock the

frigate anchored off the Nore, proceeding on Saturday morning to Gravesend, where anchor was weighed. The royal party slept on board, and the next morning, in the royal yacht *Augusta*, went up the river to Greenwich.

CHAPTER III

MARRIAGE

1795

Reception of Princess Caroline at Greenwich—Lady Jersey appointed a Lady of the Bedchamber—Her disgraceful conduct—The Princess's dresses—Arrival of her Royal Highness at St. James's—The first meeting of the Prince of Wales and his bride—His extraordinary behaviour—Her indignation—The marriage ceremony—An eye-witness's account—The Prince of Wales drunk in the Chapel Royal—The bridal night—The Prince's complaint against his consort—His debts—He reduces his household—His ill-treatment of the Princess—His relations with Lady Jersey—The Princess's letters intercepted—Correspondence between Lord and Lady Jersey and Dr. Randolph.

THE Princess should have been met at Greenwich by Lady Jersey, Lord Claremont, and Colonel Greville, who had been appointed to her household; but when she landed they had not arrived, owing, it was said, to Lady Jersey not having been ready to start from London at the proper time. There can be no doubt it was Lady Jersey's deliberate intention to keep her Royal Highness waiting: even when she did come on the scene and the Princess, whose attention had been attracted by the maimed pensioners, with humorous intent, remarked: "*Comment, manque-t-il à tous les Anglais un bras ou une jambe?*" she curtly silenced her royal mistress with a harsh, "*Point de persiflage, Madame, je vous en prie.*" That Lady Jersey

From an engraving in the collection of A. M. Broadley, Esq., by W. Evans, after a drawing by E. Scott.

GEORGE, PRINCE OF WALES.

should have been made Lady of the Bedchamber to her Royal Highness was a crying scandal. That the Prince of Wales should have wished it is, taking his character into account, not extraordinary; but that the Queen should have sanctioned it is only to be explained by the extreme dislike she had conceived to the daughter-in-law who was as yet unknown to her, and is not to be excused on any ground whatsoever. Lady Jersey had desired the appointment in order that she might be in a position to prejudice the relations of husband and wife and so keep herself paramount in the Prince's affection; and from the first this unscrupulous woman made herself objectionable to her Royal Highness. She had been directed to proceed to Stade to meet the royal party; but although she started on the journey, at Rochester, pleading ill-health, she had turned back; and when she did arrive at Greenwich she at once expressed her opinion of the Princess's costume in such terms as to evoke from Lord Malmesbury a sharp rebuke. When the carriages came to take the party to London she declared that she could not sit with her back to the horses, and suggested that she should be allowed to seat herself by the side of her Royal Highness. Once again Lord Malmesbury had to intervene. "I told her," he noted in his Diary, "as she must have known that riding backward in a coach disagreed with her, she ought never to have accepted the situation of a Lady of the Bedchamber, who ought never to sit forward; and that if she *really* was likely to be sick, I would put Mrs. Aston in the coach with the Princess. . . . This, of course, settled the business." Lord Malmesbury refrained from mentioning to Lady Jersey that there were other

reasons why she ought never to have accepted—much less intrigued for—the situation of a Lady of the Bedchamber; but he was very worried about the whole business, having on board the boat learnt that the Prince of Wales, even while awaiting the arrival of the bride, was behaving outrageously with his latest favourite, who, on her side, was comporting herself most shamelessly. It has been said that, in spite of what the Princess knew about Lady Jersey's relations with the Prince, on the way to London she entertained the Lady-in-waiting with stories of her love-affair at home, stating that she loved one little finger of a certain individual far better than she should love the whole person of the Prince of Wales; but, foolish as her Royal Highness's conduct often was, this seems almost incredible, and, as a matter of fact, since the only authority for the truth of the statement was Lady Jersey, it is more likely than not to be untrue.

The Princess had arrived at Greenwich attired in a muslin dress with a blue satin petticoat and a black beaver hat with blue and black feathers; but this costume she changed for a white satin gown which Lady Jersey had brought. When driving to London she wore over this a mantle of green satin trimmed with gold and adorned with loops and tassels *à la* Brandenburg; and, rejecting the turban-cap of white satin, trimmed with crape and ornamented with white feathers, offered by her Lady-in-waiting, she remained faithful to the beaver hat. After taking leave of her host, Admiral Sir Hugh Palliser, the Governor of the Hospital, the Princess, accompanied by her suite, set out from Greenwich escorted by a detachment

of the Prince of Wales's Light Dragoons (including Ensign George Bryan Brummell), and in the early afternoon arrived at Cleveland Row, in the precincts of St. James's Palace, where the Duke of Cumberland's apartments had been prepared for her.

The Prince of Wales at once drove over from Carlton House to welcome her. Only Lord Malmesbury was in the room at the meeting, and he has related the astonishing scene. When the Prince entered the Princess endeavoured to kneel, but the Prince raised her, embraced her, said barely a word, and walked over to the other end of the room. "Harris, I am not very well; pray get me a glass of brandy," he said. Probably his Royal Highness had had brandy enough, for, "Sir," replied Lord Malmesbury, "had you not better have a glass of water?" "No," said the Prince, with an oath, "I will go directly to the Queen"; and went away forthwith. The Princess had looked on amazed. "*Mon Dieu! est ce que le Prince est toujours comme cela?*" she asked the perturbed Envoy; and she added, "*Je le trouve très gros, et nullement aussi beau que son portrait.*" Lord Malmesbury did his best to minimise the importance of the incident, and said that it was only natural that his Royal Highness should be much affected and flurried at this first interview with his bride. The Princess said nothing, but there can be no doubt that she was deeply wounded. She was a proud woman, and the least subservient of Royalties. She had been prepared to do her best in that position to which she had been called; but now, outraged, she determined to make it clear that she was not a person to be ill-treated with impunity. There was a dinner in the

evening at which were present the Prince and all who had attended her from Greenwich : the Princess was, Lord Malmesbury has recorded, " flippant, rattling, affecting raillery and wit, and throwing out vulgar hints about Lady Jersey." Lord Malmesbury regretted this behaviour, because it further disgusted the Prince, who might have been brought to behave himself decently if his consort had been meek. His Royal Highness had, however, met a spirit more proud than his own, which would have been willing to give and take, but which under no circumstances would give all when nothing was offered. She had been insulted when the Prince allowed his mistress to be appointed a Lady of the Bedchamber ; she had been further insulted at the Prince's conduct at their first interview. His Royal Highness had named the game : her Royal Highness played it with him. The Princess herself stated that " one of the civil things his Royal Highness did just at first was to find fault with my shoes ; and, as I was very lively in those days, I told him to make me a better pair, and bring them to me." From the first the Prince seems to have been determined to do all he could to prevent her taking her fair share of the privileges of her position. Thus, when on the evening before the marriage, a large crowd, assembled in Cleveland Row, and the Princess ordered a window to be opened that she might bow to the people, his Royal Highness led her away, and himself went to the window and bowed, uttered thanks for the kindly attention shown, and begged them to excuse his bride appearing as she was fatigued.

The marriage took place at eight o'clock in the evening on April 8, in the Chapel Royal, St. James's,

the Archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by the Bishop of London, officiating. An eye-witness's account of the proceedings has been preserved in the Jerningham Papers :

Lady Maria Stuart to Charlotte Jerningham

One of them [the foreign ministers] informed me that the Prince was serious more than can be told ; indeed one of his Equerries told me to-night that he was *très morne*, did not speak enough to his wife, and twice spoke crossly ; he was so agitated during the ceremony that it was expected he would have burst out in tears. Her R.H. behaved gravely and decently during the ceremony, as I was told, but was in the greatest joy possible going to the Chapel, and did nothing but chatter with the Duke of Clarence while she was waiting with him at the altar for the arrival of the Prince. . . . The Prince looked like Death and full of confusion, as if he wished to hide himself from the looks of the whole world. I think he is much to be pitied. The bride, on the contrary, appeared in the highest spirits, when she passed by us first, smiling and nodding to every one. I thought she appeared more grave in going away, but certainly not more reserved.

Perhaps Lady Maria Stuart would have had less pity for the Prince had she been aware that his pallor and confusion were due less to his emotions than to the fact that he was under the influence of drink. " My brother," John, Duke of Bedford, subsequently told Lord Holland, " was one of the two unmarried Dukes who supported the Prince at the ceremony, and he had need of his support ; for my brother told me the Prince was so drunk that he could scarcely

support him from falling. He told my brother he had drunk several glasses of brandy to enable him to go through the ceremony." The Duke of Bedford added that there could be no doubt that it was, so far as the Prince was concerned, a compulsory marriage. Of that, of course, there can be no question; but it was not the bride who had coerced him, and there would be some sympathy for the Prince if he had treated his consort—it is too much to ask, with affection, but with courtesy. It was naturally a trying day for his Royal Highness, who must have had vividly brought before his mind the occasion on which he was married to the woman of his choice—that woman of his choice whom he had put from him, not for a royal bride whom he espoused for reasons of State, but for a mistress.

After the ceremony the company assembled in the Queen's apartments at Buckingham House, where a Drawing-room was held, followed by a supper. The bridal couple then drove to Carlton House, and of what happened there it is sufficient to give the Princess's trenchant statement: "Judge what it was to have a drunken husband on one's wedding-day, and one who passed the greatest part of his bridal-night in the grate, where he fell, and where I left him!"

The bridal couple lived together as husband and wife for two or three weeks, but not afterwards. The Prince was loud in his complaints about his consort, and, after she had given a particularly unhappy exhibition of bad manners, he turned to Lord Malmesbury and asked how he liked that sort of thing. "Why did you not tell me before, or write it to me from Bruns-

After an engraving by H. Pye.

CARLTON HOUSE, PALL MALL.

wick?" he complained; to which the Envoy made reply that there was nothing against the Princess's moral character or conduct, and that he was "not sent on a *discretionary* commission, but with the *most positive commands to ask Princess Caroline in marriage*, and nothing more." There was, of course, something to be said for the Prince, who, however, from the first was determined that nothing about his bride should please him. Lord Oxford stated that everyone spoke most favourably of the Princess's face as being most pleasing: to her husband she was ugly. A greater fault than looks in his Royal Highness's eyes was that she was slovenly in dress: yet even this might have been remedied. Doubtless, what he objected to most was her manner. She was not at her best tactful, but, being treated with contempt, she frequently goaded him to anger. Gifted with an indomitable spirit, she stood up to him, an attitude in woman with which he was unacquainted, which first surprised and dismayed, and finally infuriated, him.

To make matters worse, the Prince soon discovered that the payment of his debts, the condition upon which he had consented to marry, was notwithstanding to devolve upon himself. On April 27, 1795, the King invited Parliament to make a settlement upon the Prince and Princess of Wales, and to come to some arrangement by which his financial position might be made sound. The Prince's income was £60,000 a year from the Civil List and £13,000 a year from the Duchy of Cornwall. Parliament now granted him, in place of £60,000, no less than £125,000 a year; but as of this £65,000 a year and the revenues

of the Duchy were to be earmarked for payment of debts, his situation was really little or no better than it had been before his marriage. But not content with making the Prince discharge his liabilities, Parliament passed a bill to prevent future Princes of Wales from incurring debts. "The bill to prevent future Princes of Wales from incurring debts is attended with a marked personality to his Royal Highness," the Duke of Clarence, acting as spokesman for his eldest brother, protested indignantly on the occasion of the second reading in the House of Lords. "When the marriage of his Royal Highness was agreed upon, there was a stipulation that he should be exonerated from his debts. From such a stipulation, was it to be expected that the debts were to be left hanging over him for the space of nine years or longer? Is this a method to support his dignity? The Prince has certainly acquiesced in whatever measures have been taken by Parliament. How could he do otherwise? Advantage has been taken of the difficulties in which he is involved to procure this from him. He has been forced to express his acquiescence that something might be done." Not even this plaintive appeal, however, could move Parliament from its resolve. The Prince made the only retort in his power: he reduced his establishment, retaining only the Marchioness of Townsend, Lady Jersey, Lady Cameron, and Lady Cholmondeley, as Ladies of the Bedchamber to the Princess; Lord Jersey as Master of the Horse, Generals Hulse and Lake as Equerries, and Lord Cholmondeley as Master of the Household.

Much sympathy was bestowed on the Princess on

account of this public declaration that the marriage was arranged merely in the hope that the Prince would be relieved of his financial troubles by the nation grateful to him for endeavouring to secure the succession in the direct line. Such sympathy was, however, supererogatory, for, of course, no one knew better than the Princess that the alliance was a marriage *de convenance*. "I, you know, was the victim of mammon; the Prince of Wales's debts must be paid, and poor little I's person was the pretence," she told Lady Charlotte Campbell. "Parliament would vote supplies for the Heir Apparent's *marriage*; the King would help his little help. A Protestant Princess must be found—they fixed upon the Prince's cousin. To tell you God's truth, I always hated it; but, to oblige my father, anything. But the moment I saw my *futur* and Lady Jersey together, I knew how it all was, and I said to myself, 'Oh, very well!' I took my *partie*—and so it would have been if—but, oh mine God! I could be the slave of a man I love; but one whom I love not and who did not love me, impossible—*c'est autre chose*." But this must not be taken as an admission that the Princess was content with a loveless union: she would gladly have had, and have given, affection. "Very few husbands love their wives; and, I confess, the moment any person is obliged to marry any person, it is enough to render them hateful," she admitted; adding regretfully, "Had I come over here as a Princess, with my father, on a visit, as Mr. Pitt once wanted my father to have done, it might have been very different."

The Prince being dissatisfied with his bride, he determined that she too should not be without

ground of complaint, and admirably did he succeed in his purpose. They went to Kempshot about a week after the marriage, and there he assembled his "very blackguard companions," as her Royal Highness described them to Lord Minto, "who were constantly drunk and filthy, sleeping and snoring in boots on the sofas." "In other respects," she added, "the scene was more like the Prince of Wales at Eastcheap than like any notions I had acquired before of a prince or of a gentleman." Every slight, nay, every insult that the Prince of Wales could inflict upon his wife was employed. Practical jokes were played upon her, and played in no sense of levity. All the furniture, except two shabby chairs, was removed from her dining-room at Carlton House. The Queen ably seconded her son, and did her best to make Caroline as unhappy as could be. "If anybody say to me at this moment—Will you pass your life over again, or be killed? I would choose death," the unfortunate lady subsequently confided to Lady Charlotte Campbell, thinking, doubtless, of these days as of her later troubles; "for, you know, a little sooner or later we must all die; but to live a life of wretchedness twice over—oh! mine God, no!"

The Princess's principal grievance was her husband's intimacy with Lady Jersey. The actual relations between the Prince and Lady Jersey perturbed her not at all; but she did resent the fact that his Royal Highness in public showed the mistress honour at the expense of the wife. Of this one instance must suffice. The Prince, as a wedding present, gave his bride some pearl bracelets; these soon after he took back and bestowed them upon Lady Jersey, who

wore them at a public function in the presence of her Royal Highness. The depth of the Queen's hatred of Caroline is to be discerned in that she whose proud boast it was to keep her Court pure supported Lady Jersey. Lady Jersey repaid her Majesty by spying upon the Princess of Wales, repeating her conversation, and, it was generally surmised, on one occasion at least intercepting her correspondence. In June 1795, when her Royal Highness was at Brighton, she entrusted a packet of letters to members of her family to the care of Dr. Randolph, who was about to pay a visit to Brunswick. The correspondence found its way into the Queen's hands, and to this day it has never been explained how this came to pass, albeit the newspapers of the day openly accused Lady Jersey of being responsible. It is certain, however, that it was not by chance that the letters came into the possession of her Majesty. The following letters, which explain themselves, were at the time regarded as a shallow, concerted manœuvre on the part of the writers to clear themselves of the charge levelled against them. It is somewhat amusing to find Lord Jersey suddenly solicitous for his wife's honour.

Lady Jersey to Dr. Randolph

PALL-MALL.

The newspapers being full of accusations of my having opened a letter either to, or from, her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, and as I cannot in any way account for what can have given rise to such a story, excepting the loss of those letters, with which you were intrusted last summer, I must entreat that you will state the whole transaction, and publish the

account in the newspapers as you may think fit. Her Royal Highness having told me, at the time when my inquiries at Brighton, and yours in London, proved ineffectual, that she did not care about the letters, they being only of form; the whole business made so little impression on me, that I do not even recollect in what month I had the pleasure of seeing you at Brighton. I think you will agree with me, that defending myself from the charge of opening a letter is pretty much the same thing as if I was to prove that I had not picked a pocket; yet in this case I believe it may be of some use to shew upon what grounds so extraordinary a calumny is founded. As I cannot wish to leave any mystery upon this affair, you are at liberty to publish this letter, if you think proper to do so.

Lord Jersey to Dr. Randolph

June 30, 1796.

Lady Jersey wrote to you early in the last week requesting that a full statement from you, of all that had passed relating to the packet of letters belonging to her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, might appear in public print. To that letter she has received no answer from you; nor have I learned that any such publication has appeared. The delay I have been willing to attribute to accident. But it now becomes my duty to call upon you, and I do require it of you, that an explicit narrative may be laid before the public; it is a justice she is entitled to, a justice Lady Jersey's character claims, and which she has, and which you have acknowledged she has, a right to demand at your hands. Your silence upon this occasion I shall consider as countenancing that calumny which the false representations of the business have so shamefully and unjustly drawn upon Lady Jersey.

Dr. Randolph to Lady Jersey

[*Circa July 6, 1796.*]

I need not recall to your Ladyship's recollection the interview I had with the Princess at Brighton, when she delivered to me the packet in question; all her attendants-in-waiting were, I believe, present, and the conversation generally turned upon the various branches of her august family, and the alteration I should find in them after an absence of ten years. This interview, if I am not mistaken, took place on the 30th of August [1795], and after waiting, by her Royal Highness's desire, until the 14th, when the Prince was expected from Windsor, to know if he had any commands to honour me with; I had no sooner received from Mr. Churchill his Royal Highness's answer than I departed from London with the intention of proceeding to Yarmouth on the 11th. On my arrival in town, finding some very unpleasant accounts of the state of Mrs. Randolph's health, I took the liberty of signifying the occurrence to her Royal Highness; annexing to it, at the same time, a wish to defer my journey for the present, and that her Royal Highness would permit me to return the packet, or allow me to consign it to the care of a friend, who was going into Germany, and would see it safely delivered. To this I received, through your Ladyship, a most gracious message from her Royal Highness, requesting me by all means to lay aside my intentions, and to return the packet. In consequence of such orders, I immediately went to Carlton-house to inform myself by what conveyance the letters and parcels were usually sent to Brighton, and was told that no servant was employed, but that every day they were, together with the newspapers, committed to the charge of the Brighton post-coach from the Golden-cross, Charing-cross.

On the following morning, therefore, I attended at the Golden-cross, previous to the departure of the coach, and having first seen it regularly booked, delivered my parcel, inclosing the Princess's packet, addressed to your Ladyship at the Pavilion. Immediately afterwards I set out for Bath, and had scarcely been a fortnight at home when I received the following letter from your Ladyship :

[Enclosures]

Lady Jersey to Dr. Randolph

Brighton, *September 1st*, 1795.

In consequence of your letter, I had her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales's commands to desire that as you did not go to Brunswick, you should return the packet which she had given you. I wrote accordingly about a fortnight ago. Her Royal Highness, not having received the packet, is uneasy about it, and desires you to inform me how you sent the letters to her, and where they were directed. If left at Carlton-house, pray call there, and make some enquiries respecting them.

Dr. Randolph to Lady Jersey

Bath, *September 4th*, 1795.

I know not when I have been more seriously concerned than at the receipt of your Ladyship's letter, which was forwarded to me this morning. The morning I left town, which was on the 20th of August, I went to the Brighton post-coach, which I was told at Carlton-house was the usual conveyance of the Princess's papers and packets, and booked a parcel addressed to your Ladyship at the Pavilion, inclosing the letters of her Royal Highness. I have sent to a

friend in London by this night's post, to trace the business, and will request your Ladyship to let your servants call at the Ship, the inn I believe the coach drives to at Brighton, to make inquiry there, and to examine the bill of parcels for Thursday the 20th of August. If this prove not successful, I shall hold it my duty to return to town, and pursue the discovery myself. I shall not be easy till the packet is delivered safe; and trusting that this will soon be the case, I remain, etc.

CHAPTER IV

SEPARATION

1796

Birth of the Princess Charlotte—A separation agreed upon—The King intervenes in the interest of a reconciliation—The Princess demands Lady Jersey's dismissal—Her correspondence with the Prince of Wales and the King—Lady Jersey compelled to retire—Her insolent letter to the Princess—At the King's desire, the Princess makes overtures for a reconciliation with the Prince—The Prince tired of Lady Jersey—He severs his connection with her—He desires to return to Mrs. Fitzherbert—Eventually overcomes her reluctance—The Princess's opinion of Mrs. Fitzherbert—The Princess's only *faux pas*.

"TIME went on," the Princess of Wales said, "and the case was, I began to be with child, and all the wise people said so; but I pitied them, for I no more believed it than anything." None the less, it was true.

The Princess of Wales to a German Friend

December 1, 1795.

I expect speedily to be the mother of an infant. I know not how I shall be able to support myself in the hour of solitude, but I trust in the benevolence of Heaven. The Queen seldom visits me, and my sisters-in-law are equally attentive! Yet the English character I admire, and, when I appear in public, nothing can be more flattering than the

reception which I meet with. I was much gratified, some time ago, with a visit to one of the principal theatres. The spectacle was imposing, and when the audience rose to sing the National Anthem I thought I had never witnessed anything so grand before. Yet why do I tell you of these things? I am surrounded with miserable and evil principles; and whatever I attempt is misrepresented. The Countess [of Jersey] still continues here. I hate her, and I am confident that she does me no less. My husband is very partial to her, and so the rest you will be able to divine. They tell me I shall have a girl. The Prince wants a boy, but I do not care which. By the laws of England the parents have but little to do with it in future life. This I shudder at very greatly. I suppose you have seen the English papers. This, my dear ——, how much the daughter of the Duke of Brunswick must have felt.

The Princess gave birth, at Carlton House on January 7, 1796, to a daughter, named Charlotte Augusta, after her two grandmothers. The christening, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, took place on February 11, the sponsors being the King, the Queen, and the Duchess of Brunswick (represented at the ceremony by the Princess Royal). Addresses of congratulation poured in upon the royal parents, and the City of London, as represented by the Court of Common Council, intimated its desire to present an Address in person by a deputation headed by the Lord Mayor. To the general surprise, Lord Cholmondeley, the Master of his Royal Highness's Household, replied, however, that, "The Prince of Wales, being under the necessity of reducing his establishment,

was precluded from receiving the Addresses in a manner suitable to his situation" ; but stated that his Royal Highness would accept copies of the Addresses. When the matter came up for discussion at the next meeting of the Common Council a member, Birch by name, at once moved, "That his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales having stated that the inadequacy of his establishment precluded him from receiving the compliments of congratulation voted to be presented to their Royal Highnesses in a way suitable to his situation, this Court are of opinion that they cannot, consistently with their own dignity, suffer the said compliments to be presented in any other than the customary form." This resolution was carried, and a copy of it was conveyed to his Royal Highness. The Prince's refusal to receive a deputation from the City of London was gravely censured in most quarters, and the rebuke of the Court of Common Council was held to be justified. At the time the Prince's action was regarded as a splenetic protest against the decision of Parliament on the subject of his financial embarrassments ; but subsequently it was generally thought to be dictated by a desire not to receive congratulations conjointly with a consort, from whom formally to be separated was his immediate object and intention.

"After I lay in—*je vous jure* 'tis true ; upon my honour, upon my soul, 'tis true," the Princess told Lady Charlotte Campbell, "I received a message, through Lord Cholmondeley, to tell me I never was to have the honour of inhabiting the same room with my husband again. I said very well—but, as my memory was short, I begged to have this polite message in

From an engraving, after R. Cosway.

QUEEN CAROLINE, WITH HER DAUGHTER THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.

writing from him. I had it—and was free. I left Carlton House, and went to Charlton. Oh! how happy I was! Everybody blamed me, but I never repented me of this step. Oh! mine God, what I have suffered! Luckily, I had a spirit, or I never should have outlived it." The matter was not so easily arranged as might appear from this statement, for the King, who had to be informed of the step that was about to be taken, endeavoured to effect a reconciliation. His Majesty had been kept in ignorance of the treatment to which his daughter-in-law had been subjected, but now he learnt everything, and expressed himself strongly on the subject. He then realised that it was impossible that this husband and wife could again live together, but, while sympathising with the Princess, he held to his point that appearances should be preserved, that at least they should reside under the same roof and occasionally appear together at public ceremonies. To this end he addressed them both, and had some success with the Princess, who, while nothing would induce her to be again a wife to the Prince, was not eager for an open separation, which she realised, however much right would be on her side, would detract from her dignity and probably in later years be injurious to her child. With these thoughts in her mind the Princess stated in April that she would still be willing to reside with the Prince, but that his conduct and his treatment of her must be altered. The Prince's reply was to the point: he desired an immediate separation, and proposed that, when that had taken place, each should go different ways and neither accountable to the other. This was the

final message brought by Lord Cholmondeley, and then it was that the Princess gave her consent to his arrangement, but declared that it must be put into writing, as, henceforth, under no circumstances, not even the death of the Princess Charlotte, would she ever agree, or expect to be asked to agree, again to cohabit with her husband.

The Prince of Wales to the Princess of Wales

MADAM, WINDSOR CASTLE, *30th of April*, 1796.

As Lord Cholmondeley informs me that you wish I would define in writing the terms upon which we are to live, I shall endeavour to explain myself upon that head, with as much clearness, and with as much propriety, as the nature of the subject will admit. Our inclinations are not in our power, nor should either of us be held answerable to the other, because nature has not made us suitable to each other. Tranquil and comfortable society is, however, in our power; let our intercourse, therefore, be restricted to that, and I will distinctly subscribe to the condition which you required, through Lady Cholmondeley, that even in the event of any accident happening to my daughter, which I trust Providence in its mercy will avert, I shall not infringe the terms of the restriction by proposing, at any period, a connection of a more particular nature. I shall now finally close this disagreeable correspondence, trusting that as we have completely explained ourselves to each other, the rest of our lives will be passed in uninterrupted tranquillity.

I am, Madam,
With great truth
Very sincerely yours,
GEORGE P.

The Princess of Wales to the Prince of Wales

Le 6 Mai, 1796.

L'aveu de votre conversation avec Lord Cholmondeley, ne m'étonne, ni m'offense. C'étoit me confirmer, ce que vous m'avez tacitement insinué depuis une année; mais il y auroit après cela, un manque de délicatesse, ou pour mieux dire, une bassesse indigne de me plaindre des conditions que vous vous imposez à vous-même.

Je ne vous aurois fait de réponse si votre lettre n'étoit concue de manière à faire doubter, si cet arrangement vient de vous ou de moi; et vous savez que vous en avez seul l'honneur. La lettre que vous m'annoncez comme la dernière, m'oblige de communiquer au roi, comme à mon souverain, et à mon père, votre aveu et ma réponse. Vous trouverez ci-incluse la copie de celle que j'écris au roi. Je vous en préviens pour ne pas m'attirer de votre part la moindre reproche de duplicité. Comme je n'ai dans ce moment, d'autre protecteur que sa majesté, je m'en rapporte uniquement à lui. Et si ma conduite mérite son approbation, je serai, du moins en partie, consolée.

Du reste, je conserve toute la connoissance possible de ce que je me trouve par votre moyen, comme Princesse de Galles, dans un situation à pouvoir me livrer sans contrainte, à un vertu chère à mon cœur,—je veux dire la bienfaisance. Ce sera pour moi un devoir d'agir de plus par un autre motif; savoir, celui de donner l'exemple de la patience, et de la résignation dans toutes sortes d'épreuves. Rendez-moi la justice de me croire, que je ne cesserai jamais de faire des vœux pour votre bonheur, et d'être votre bien devouée, (Signé) CAROLINE.

It cannot be supposed that the Prince and Princess of Wales would ever have found themselves in com-

plete harmony, but it is unlikely that they would have so soon and so entirely broken their bonds but for the malevolent influence of Lady Jersey, who seems to have been at pains not only to keep husband and wife apart, but to bring the relations between them to a crisis. Before the formal separation, within a couple of months of the Princess Charlotte's birth, the Princess of Wales was subjected to such indignities as arose from her husband's devotion to his mistress, which he seemed desirous to make known to all and sundry. Thus, in the Diary of Charles Abbot we read, under the date of February 25, 1796: "A few nights ago, Lady Jersey was invited with the Prince's party to the Queen's House, and put to a card-table with the Princess Augusta and Lady Holdernesse. The Prince of Wales in the course of the evening repeatedly came up to her table, and publicly squeezed her hand. The King sees and disapproves of the Carlton House system. The Queen is won over to the Prince's wishes by his attention, and presents in jewels, etc.; the Princess says, her father told her to observe every thing and say nothing." The same observer noted three weeks later: "The Queen openly patronised Lady Jersey. The Prince and Princess of Wales within these last three days have had an open difference, but at the Opera last night affected an extraordinary cordiality." The Princess of Wales in this matter behaved with dignity. At last, however, she refused to have Lady Jersey at her table, or, indeed, in her presence, except when the Prince was with her; and although his Royal Highness demanded that she should treat Lady Jersey in the same way as the rest of her ladies, nothing could

move her from this resolve. While, however, the Princess and her consort were living together even nominally, she took no further step; but, after the separation, she saw no reason why she should continue to be afflicted with and insulted by having this woman in her household, and she determined to get rid of her without further delay.

The Princess of Wales to the Prince of Wales

Le 28 de Mai, 1796.

Je suis trop pénétrée des devoirs que m'imposent les relations que j'ai avec vous pour blesser en quoique ce soit votre délicatesse, je ne décide point des raisons pour lesquelles vous croyez devoir ménager Lady Jersey, et je ne souhaite pas du tout de lui nuir dans l'opinion publique, mais j'en appelle à votre mémoire sur la manière dont elle s'est conduite vis-à-vis de moi à Brighton; elle étoit telle que je suis en droit d'après votre lettre même d'insister qu'elle demande sa rétraite; une femme que j'ai raison de regarder comme la cause de la désunion qui regne malheureusement entre nous, ne peut que m'être personellement désagréable. Vous avez du sens et un cœur—mettez vous à ma place, et prononcez!! Après cet aveu que je vous fais, ma surprise est grande de voir Lady Jersey s'obstiner à rester à mon service, en dépit de l'idée qu'elle sait que je dois avoir d'elle, c'est annoncer un manque absolu de délicatesse. Ce seroit agir en ami avec elle que de lui persuader de faire sans hésiter davantage, cette démarche; personne ne pourra m'imputer le motif d'agir en personne, qui manque d'estime pour vous quand je vous demande de consentir à ce que je désire avec tant de justice. Vous me conjurez de ne pas mettre obstacle à la bonne intelligence que vous croyez devoir résulter

de l'accord que vous me proposez ; je vous conjure, à mon tour, de vous rappeller ce que je suis en droit d'attendre de vous, et des sentimens paternels que vous devez à votre enfant qui souffrira toute sa vie de notre désunion. — Je suis, avec la plus grande sincérité, votre dévouée CAROLINE.

The Princess of Wales was determined to have her way, and, her letter to the Prince failing to produce the desired effect, she addressed herself to the King, praying him to remove from her circle the woman who could not by any other means be persuaded to give up her position in the household.

The Princess of Wales to the King

SIRE, *Ce 19 de juin, 1796.*

Je me vois encore dans la facheuse nécessité de troubler la tranquillité de votre Majesté par une lettre qui intéresse essentiellement mon bonheur et mon répos, et de récourir à Ses Sages Conseils. C'est avec la plus grande surprise que j'ai appris que l'on répandoit dans le public le bruit de ma répugnance à me prêter à une parfaite réconciliation avec le Prince de Galles ; tandis qu'il ne peut y avoir de bonheur pour moi, que dans un rapprochement sincère avec lui : je supplie donc votre Majesté de me rendre la justice de croire, malgré tous les rapports contraires qu'on pourra lui en faire, que ce sont là mes véritables sentimens.

J'ai l'honneur de joindre ici une copie de la réponse que j'ai faite à Lord Moira sur les propositions du Prince, que votre Majesté juge elle-même, si le Prince est en droit de s'en offenser, puis qu'elle n'a pas été donné dans l'idée de lui prescrire des termes, mais seulement, parceque je n'étois malheureusement,

que trop persuadée que c'étoit l'unique moyen d'obtenir cette vraie réconciliation dont dépend mon seul bonheur.

J'ai l'honneur de me dire, avec le plus profond respect, Sire, de votre Majesté la très humble et très obéissante fille et sujette, CAROLINE.

The King to the Princess of Wales

MADAME MA FILLE, WINDSOR, *ce 20 juin*, 1796.

J'ai reçu hier Votre lettre au sujet du bruit répandu dans le public de Votre répugnance à vous prêter à une parfaite réconciliation avec Mon Fils le Prince de Galles ; je ne disconviens pas que cette opinion commence à prendre racine, et qu'il n'y a qu'une manière de la détruire, c'est que Mon Fils ayant consenti que la Comtesse de Jersey doit, suivant Votre désir, quitter Votre service, et ne pas être admise à Votre société privée, vous devez témoigner votre desir qu'il revient chez lui, et que pour rendre la réconciliation complète on doit des deux cotes s'abstenir de reproches, et ne faire des confidences à d'autres sur ce sujet. Une conduite si propre certainement remettra cette union entre Mon Fils et Vous, qui est un des évènemens que j'ai le plus a cœur.

Mons fils le Duc de York vous remettra cette Lettre, et Vous assuréra de plus de l'amitié sincère avec laquelle je, suis, Madame Ma Belle-Fille,

Votre très affectionné Beau-Père,

GEORGE R.*

The King's intervention was effective, and Lady Jersey was given her choice of resignation or dismissal.

* From the original letter in the possession of A. M. Broadley, Esq.

Brought face to face with these alternatives, she chose to retire, and, as a parting shot, wrote the following insolent letter (hitherto unpublished) to the royal lady whom she had so wantonly injured.

Lady Jersey to the Princess of Wales

MADAM, *June* 29, 1796.

I seize the earliest opportunity in my power to have the honour of informing your Royal Highness that I have this day obtained the permission of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to resign into *his* hands the situation of Lady of the Bed-Chamber in your Royal Highness's Family, a situation which I had the honour of being appointed by *him* at the same time with the rest of those who compose your Royal Highness's Household.

The same duty and attachment which I shall ever be proud to profess for his Royal Highness, and which induced me to accept of that appointment, urged me to obey his commands in retaining it long after the infamous and unjustifiable Paragraphs in the public papers rendered it impossible for a Person of the Rank and situation which I hold in this country (indeed for any one possessing the honest pride and spirit of an English woman) to submit to hold a situation which was to make her the object of deep and designing Calumny.*

The Prince of Wales represented to me, upon my mentioning my earnest request to his Royal Highness for my instant resignation, that such a step would not only be regarded as a confirmation of every absurd and abominable falsehood that had been so industriously fabricated for the *present purpose*, but that it

* This, presumably, is a reference to the incident of the intercepted letters.

From a mezzotint engraving in the collection of A. M. Broadley, Esq.

LADY JERSEY.

would be further promoting the views of those who had been so wickedly labouring to injure his Royal Highness in the public mind, and through him to degrade the rest of the Royal Family. But the moment is now come when I can with propriety withdraw myself from such Persecution and Injustice, and the conscious satisfaction that I have *by my Silence* and Forbearance on *my* part given the strongest proof of my duty to the Royal Family, and of that respectful Attachment and Gratitude to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, which can never end but with my Life. I am, Madam, With all possible respect

Your Royal Highness's most humble Servant,

(Signed) A. JERSEY.

The public, which had no doubt as to the right and wrongs of the affair, began to take a hand in it, and showed its disapproval of Lady Jersey in a very marked manner. "Lady Jersey became very unpopular with the mob," the Hon. Mrs. Calvert noted in her Diary early in 1796, "and one evening, as I was going through Covent Garden in my chariot . . . . I was taken for her . . . and my carriage and servants were well pelted with mud before we got clear." On the other hand, the Princess was everywhere received by the public with a great show of favour, and, as she said one evening to the Duchess of Leeds at the opera, when she had been loudly applauded upon entering, "I suppose the public has been acquainted with what is only *trop vrai*," meaning that the Prince had not spoken to her for three months, and that she had nothing with which to reproach herself in the matter.

Urged by the King, and remembering the advice of her father and Lord Malmesbury to be willing

always to forgive, the Princess made overtures to her husband for á reconciliation, which seemed to her possible now that Lady Jersey was to be removed.

The Princess of Wales to the Prince of Wales

Le 20 juin, 1796.

Je saisis avec le plus grand empressement les ordres de Sa Majesté Le Roi, qui dans la lettre dont il vient de m'honorer, me marque que vous cedez à ses désirs, ce qui me pénétre de la plus vive joye. Je vois donc arriver avec an plaisir extrême, le moment qui vous raprochera de Carlton House, et qui va terminer pour toujours une mesintelligence dont je vous assure que de mon côté il ne sera plus question. Si vous me faites l'honneur de rechercher ma société à l'avenir, je mettrai tous mes efforts à la rendre agréable. Si j'ai pû jamais vous déplaire, soyez assez généreux pour me le pardonner, et comptez sur une réconnoissance qui ne finira qu'avec ma vie. J'ose m'en flatter comme mère de votre enfant et comme celle qui est votre toute dévouée CAROLINE.

Nothing came of this friendly letter, but, yielding again to the King's wish, the Princess wrote again on the occasion of her consort's birthday.

The Princess of Wales to the Prince of Wales

CARLTON HOUSE, *ce* 11 *d'août*, 1796.

Ce n'est qu'au nom de ma fille que je hasarde de vous vous écrire ces peu de lignes, et de me joindre à ses sentiments qu'elle ne peut pas encore exprimer ; nous faisons mutuellement des vœux pour votre bonheur, et la continuation de votre précieuse santé —c'est un jour si interessant pour nous deux que nous

ne saurions le laisser passer sans vous le témoigner, et sous ce titre vous me pardonnez, j'espère, cette liberté.

J'ose me flatter cependant qu'en aimant votre fille, vous protégerez la mère, qui en sentira toute sa vie la plus parfaite reconnaissance, et qui est votre très dévouée CAROLINE.

The Prince of Wales to the Princess of Wales

MADAME, WEYMOUTH, *le* 13 *d'août* [1796].

Je saisis le premier moment pour vous remercier de la lettre que vous avez bien voulu m'écrire, et que j'ai reçu hier, à l'occasion de l'anniversaire de mon jour de naissance. Acceptez aussi bien mes remerciments pour la manière que vous vous y exprimez, tant pour ma fille que pour vous même, et soyez en assuré que personne ne saurait en être plus sensible que moi.

C'est avec sentiments de réconnoissance que j'ai l'honneur de m'écrire, Madame,

Votre très humble serviteur,

GEORGE, P.

If only Lady Jersey had stood between them, the Prince and Princess of Wales might have effected a reconciliation that would at least have enabled them to keep up appearances by living under the same roof, for her influence had by this time waned. Indeed, his Royal Highness was heartily sick of his mistress, and was only anxious to break off his connection. "Lady Jersey is now in the Transit of Venus," Edward Jerningham wrote about this time. "It was very evident that her reign was drawing to its Period. I believe I had mentioned this circumstance before,

but the singularity attending the progression of this affair is that the lady will not acknowledge any difference or diminution of regard on *his* side. This embarrasses the Prince exceedingly, as he wishes to let her down gently, and to separate amicably, which he thinks cannot be done if he should dismiss her in town, and unequivocally. I have given her intimations and broad suggestions which she will not understand, or at least does not seem to understand." The lady made a great fight to retain her supremacy, but it could not but be a losing battle, and in the end she had to retire, after giving her royal lover a very bad time.

It was not, then, for Lady Jersey, but because he was anxious to be reconciled with Mrs. Fitzherbert that the Prince had been so eager for separation from the Princess, and now would not listen to any proposal for their coming together again. His path, there is some pleasure in chronicling, was not easy. To Lady Jersey it had been a matter of indifference that the man with whom she was intriguing was married : Mrs. Fitzherbert, a woman of a very different stamp, would not even listen to any overtures from the man she regarded as her husband so long as he was living, even nominally, with his consort. It is important to remember this, because it was at the time, and has since been, represented that it was at Mrs. Fitzherbert's instance that the Prince first neglected, and then deserted, his consort. The general opinion of the day was presently voiced in a letter to Mrs. Fitzherbert written by Jefferys, a jeweller who had been ruined by the Prince of Wales's custom.

When the Prince of Wales was married to the Princess, it was agreed that you should retire from that *intimacy of friendship* you had so long enjoyed, and your houses in Pall-mall, and at Brighton, were given up accordingly.

However creditable, prospectively, to your character that you did retire to the villa purchased for you at Castle Hill, yet, viewed in a *retrospective* light, the necessity of such a retreat (accompanied, as it was, by a pension of several thousands per annum, payable quarterly at an eminent banker's, and a retention of the very valuable jewels, plate, etc., etc., given to you by the Prince), did not, in the opinion of the world, add much good fame to your reputation.

Had you continued in the retirement expected of you, the world would probably never have disturbed you in the enjoyment of your great possessions by any reflection upon the mode of their acquisition; but, not long after the Prince of Wales was married, his Royal Highness discontinued to live with the Princess, and returned to your society, in which he was eagerly received!!!

On this unexpected renewal of *intimacy*, an establishment, upon a still larger scale, was formed for you; a noble house, in Park Lane, most magnificently fitted up, and superbly furnished; a large retinue of servants; carriages of various descriptions; a new pavilion, built for your *separate* residence, at Brighton; and the Prince more frequently in your society than ever!!!

When, Madam, your friends pretend that *your* feelings are hurt, let me ask you (and them) if you think the people of moral character in this country have no feelings? I am sure they must relinquish all claim to any, if they could view, with indifference, such a departure from decency as this conduct exhibits in you, and not see, with anxiety and fear for the

future, the probable result of such a dreadful infatuation ;—not less dangerous to the future interest of this country, than any that was ever experienced at the profligate Court of *Versailles.*

Let no more be said, then, of *your* feelings, but consider the *poignant feelings* of the much-to-be-pitied Princess of Wales.

In this attack Jefferys let his malice or his ignorance carry him away. The facts were these. After the Prince's marriage to Caroline, Mrs. Fitzherbert's position was very difficult. She retired to Castle Hill, Ealing, where she proposed to remain indefinitely. This, however, her friends would not permit, and after about a year she yielded to their solicitations to re-enter the world, and set up house at No. 6, Tilney Street, Park Lane, receiving all the world save the Prince of Wales. The Prince had been very ill on January 9, 1796, and, thinking his last hour might be at hand, had had a will drawn up in which he left everything he possessed " to my Maria Fitzherbert, my Wife, the Wife of my heart and soul." Recovering, the desire grew upon him to revert to his former relations with Mrs. Fitzherbert, and to this end he sent again and again letters begging her to renew their marital relations. All these suggestions the lady ignored : she did not answer the Prince's letters, she made no reply to his messages. Worn out by his importunities, and weakened by her own desires, it seems that in 1799 she did, through Admiral Payne, give a half-promise that she would rejoin the Prince, who, desperate at last from pretending to be desperate —it is impossible to forget a trick he had played on her before—threatened that he would publicly pro-

From a print in the collection of A. M. Broadley, Esq., after a painting by John Russell, R.A.

MRS. FITZHERBERT.

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claim their marriage. Such action might well have ruined the Prince, who was on bad terms with his father and his consort, and unpopular with the nation, and, as doubtless he had calculated, Mrs. Fitzherbert was inclined to yield. She declared, however, that, before rejoining him, she must first appeal to Rome: if Rome would not consent to the reunion she was determined to go, and remain, abroad. Later in the year 1799 the Pope pronounced her to be the wife of the Prince of Wales according to the law of the Church, and stated that she was free to rejoin her husband if he was truly penitent for his sins and sincere in his promises of amendment. That the Pope's decision had been invited was, of course, kept a profound secret; and, indeed, it would have wrought much harm to the Prince had it become known that he had even passively been concerned in an appeal to His Holiness. After New Year's Day, 1800, Mrs. Fitzherbert and the Prince appeared frequently together in public; and in the following June Mrs. Fitzherbert made what was practically a public avowal of the reconciliation by giving at Tilney Street a breakfast "to meet his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales." Thenceforth, for a time at least, Mrs. Fitzherbert had amongst the general public the unpopularity that had once fallen to the lot of Lady Jersey. The Princess of Wales, however, bore Mrs. Fitzherbert no ill-will, albeit she was reported to have said, with some bitterness, that "she hoped *her husband* would not feel *her* any impediment to the reconciliation he was so desirous for." Indeed, she paid tribute to Mrs. Fitzherbert's good qualities: "That is the Prince's true wife; she is an excellent woman; it was a great

pity for him he ever broke vid her," she remarked one day to Lady Charlotte Campbell. "Do you know I know de man who was present at her marriage, the late Lord B——d ? * He declared to a friend of mine, that when he went to inform Mrs. Fitzherbert that the Prince had married her, she would not believe it, for she knew she was herself married to him." "The only *faux pas*," the Princess of Wales said years later at Kensington Palace to Hugh Elliot, "I have ever committed was my marriage with the husband of Mrs. Fitzherbert."

Mrs. Fitzherbert remained in favour until the Regency, when Isabella, Marchioness of Hertford, became his most intimate friend, in course of time to be displaced by Elizabeth, Lady Conyngham. As regards Lady Hertford, however, "It is only a *liaison* of vanity on her part with my better half," said the Princess of Wales.

* Orlando Bridgeman (1762–1825), the eldest son of Sir Henry Bridgeman, Bart., afterwards created first Baron Bradford.

From an engraving, after the portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds, P.R.A.

ISABELLA, MARCHIONESS OF HERTFORD.

CHAPTER V

THE PRINCESS OF WALES AT BLACKHEATH

1796—1807

The Princess's self-restraint—She leaves Carlton House—Takes up her residence at Shrewsbury House, Charlton—Her hospitality—Her guests—A glimpse of the Princess Charlotte—The Princess supported by society—The Prince makes half-hearted attempts for a reconciliation with the Princess—These overtures are declined by her Royal Highness—The Princess neglected by the Queen and her daughters—Petty annoyances inflicted on her by the royal family—Her affection for the King—The King devoted to her—He appoints her Ranger of Greenwich Park—She removes to Montague House, Blackheath—The Princess and the Princess Charlotte—The Princess and the Prince dispute for the custody of the child—The King appoints himself guardian—The Princess's summer visits—Her occupations and amusements at Blackheath—Her passion for children—Her adopted children—The Princess oppressed by the monotony of life at Blackheath—She introduces a livelier element into her society—Her want of discretion—Her candour—Her love of late hours—The Prince's suspicions aroused—He sets spies to watch the Princess.

WHILE the separation was being discussed, the Prince of Wales spent his time at Windsor and Brighton, while the Princess remained at Carlton House. "The Princess of Wales dines always alone," Charles Abbot noted at this time, "and sees no company but old people, put on her list by the Queen, Lady Jersey, etc. She goes nowhere but airings in Hyde Park. The Prince uses her unpardonably." The Queen and the Princesses never came to her,

and the sole pleasure that she was allowed was an occasional visit to the theatre or the opera. It speaks volumes for the self-restraint of the high-spirited woman under this treatment that she never let her anger get the better of her. When all the arrangements for the separation had been made, her Royal Highness, abandoning a half-formed design to return to Brunswick, left Carlton House (where, however, apartments were reserved for her use when in London) and took up her residence at Shrewsbury House, in the pretty village of Charlton, close to Blackheath. With her went Mrs. Harcourt and Miss Vernon, and, as Sub-Governess to the Princess Charlotte, Miss Garth. In this retreat, six miles from St. Paul's Cathedral, she lived very quietly, and was happy in her freedom from the irksome restrictions that had been imposed upon her under her husband's roof. She found her pleasure mostly in entertaining, and among her guests at dinner and supper were many of the most brilliant men and women of the day, who enjoyed themselves the more because the barriers of rigid etiquette were relaxed.

"The Princess made herself extremely agreeable, seemed delighted herself, and contrived to satisfy all her guests," Lord Minto wrote in the summer of 1798. "These little indulgences seemed to be in consequence of some late interposition of her family, who desired formally to know the cause of the extraordinary treatment she received. . . . Nothing can be more unexceptionable than her conduct." From Lord Minto, too, some idea of the quality of the guests at Shrewsbury House can be gleaned. "I came here last night with Lord Auckland from Black-

heath, where we had one of the grand dinners," he noted in his Diary on December 14, 1798. "The Prince and Princess of Orange and one of their sons, Lord and Lady Grenville, Lord Thurlow, Lord George Cavendish, Sir John Stepney, Lady Elgin, Mrs. and Miss Lisle." A fortnight later the chronicler was again at Blackheath, participating in a less formal entertainment, of which he gives a pleasant picture. "Our dinner," he wrote, "consisted of Lady Jane Dundas, Lady Charlotte Grenville, and Lady Mary Bentinck. Some men, among whom was Tom Grenville, disappointed her. Princess Charlotte was in the room till dinner, and is really one of the finest and pleasantest children I ever saw. The Princess of Wales romped with her about the carpet on her knees. Princess Charlotte, though very lively and excessively fond of romps and play, is remarkably good and governable. One day she had been a little naughty, however, and they were reprimanding her. Among the rest, Miss Garth said to her, 'You have been so very naughty, I don't know what we must do with you.' The little girl answered, crying, and most penitently, 'You must soot me'—meaning shoot her; but they let her off rather cheaper. Our dinner was pleasant as could be." Among her frequent visitors were William Windham—Macaulay's "chivalrous, high-souled Windham"—who at different times met at Charlton, or subsequently at Montagu House, Blackheath (whither the Princess repaired in 1801 when the King made her Ranger of Greenwich Park), Monsieur, the Prince of Condé, the Duc de Bourbon, M. de Puységur, Lord Harrington, Lord Howick, Lord Henry Petty, Lord Minto, Lord Mount

Edgcumbe, Vansittart, Lord Carysfort, Lord Petersham, Lord Carnarvon, Lord Robert Spencer, Lady Anna Maria Stanley (*née* Holroyd, and afterwards Lady Stanley of Alderley), Lady Sheffield, the Duc de Berri, M. de Rulhière, le Comte d'Escans, Miss Cholmondeley, and the Princess's favourite, Lord Henry Fitzgerald, a son of the Duke of Leinster. To this incomplete list of those to whom the Princess extended her hospitality may be added the names of the Duke of Gloucester, Charles James Fox, Lord Hood, Dundas, Lord Aurelius Beauclerc, Charles Abbot, Lord Clive, Captain Manby, Lord Eldon, and Canning, to whose son, George Charles, born in 1801, she consented to stand as godmother. It will thus be seen that society in general was on very friendly terms with her Royal Highness, who was, it may be mentioned, vastly popular with the general public, which, knowing enough of her consort's character and conduct, regarded her as a cruelly ill-used woman.

It may have been the result of awkward questions asked by the Court of Brunswick, or due to the pressure put by the King on the Prince of Wales, but, whatever the cause, there is no doubt that late in 1798 there was made, on the part of his Royal Highness, a half-hearted attempt at a reconciliation with his consort. There were rumours of this about the town before anything was actually done, and, these rumours coming to the knowledge of the Princess of Wales, she, through a friend, inquired from Lord Minto what course he thought she should pursue were overtures made by the Prince. As regards her own feelings, she caused it to be stated to him, she

was strongly averse to any *rapprochement* between herself and her consort, being firmly convinced that "it would only be desired by him to serve purposes of his own, in which her comfort and happiness would have no part; and that it could only be made by the sacrifice of the enjoyments of quiet and independence which she owed to the privacy of her life. "I think it quite essential, for the future happiness of the Princess, that no proposition for reconciliation should be defeated by any obstacle or resistance on her part," Lord Minto advised. "If you ask me whether I think such an event likely to produce that sincere and cordial union on which domestic happiness depends, I frankly own that I by no means reckon on such fortunate circumstances." He thought that there was every possibility of her being deprived of the comforts she enjoyed at Charlton and of being subjected to vexations from which she was at present free, but he preached the doctrine of *noblesse oblige*. "*She is Princess of Wales*," he said, "and can never change or be divested of that character except to assume that of *Queen*." On December 13, 1798, the Princess received a letter from the Prince inviting her to dine at Carlton House, and suggesting that she should reside there through the winter months. After giving the matter serious consideration, her Royal Highness sent a refusal. A few days later she told Lord Minto what she had done, and he told her that in his opinion she had done wrong, and begged her to return a different answer if the overtures were renewed later; but she replied that, when once she had come to a decision she adhered to it, and that on this matter her mind was made up. In October of

the next year, to the Princess's great surprise, negotiations were again opened by Admiral Payne, who asked if she would object to dining with the Prince of Wales at Carlton House. She replied that, if his Royal Highness came to Charlton, she would receive him with the utmost civility and would not allude to the disagreeablenesses and disagreements of earlier days, but that she would not go to Carlton House until she knew on what terms she was to go and to what the visit was intended to lead. Lady Minto applauded her Royal Highness's conduct, which she thought "gravely dignified," and she expressed her belief—and who can doubt she was right?—that it was only the Princess's popularity that led the Prince to reopen the matter. The Prince did not go to Shrewsbury House, and thus ended the last attempt at reconciliation.

The royal family treated the Princess with marked neglect. If she made any request it was sure to be ignored, unless it could be refused, when a refusal was sent post-haste; and many of her wishes, which the King would have granted, were purposely kept from his knowledge. All sorts of petty annoyances were heaped on her. She was not permitted to have a house in London. She asked for the appointment of a friend as one of her Ladies-in-waiting, the only reply vouchsafed was the suggestion for the position of one known to dislike her. Nothing that mean malice could think of was spared her. On the rare occasions when she attended a Drawing-room, she could not be certain even of receiving from her consort the slightest acknowledgment of her presence.

The Duchess of Brunswick had never been weary

of abusing Queen Charlotte to her daughter, and consequently from the first the Princess had been prepared for ill-treatment at the hands of the woman whom her mother assured her had every possible meanness in her character. As regards the King she had had an open mind on her arrival, which was soon converted into a feeling of affection. She treated him as she did her father, turned to him in her troubles, sure of receiving sympathy always and support when possible. They wrote affectionate letters to each other, and the King came to Charlton whenever he could, usually bringing with him a present for her and for his granddaughter. He was very ill in the early part of 1801, but the first time he rode out after his recovery in May (without telling any one where he was going), he went to Blackheath, arriving so early that the Princess had to receive him in her bedgown and nightcap. He told Lord Uxbridge that, during the whole course of his illness, the Princess had been in his thoughts. It was about this time that he appointed her Ranger of Greenwich Park, in spite of the fact that he was strongly pressed by the Queen and her children not to bestow upon her this post. However, this opposition could not move him from his resolution, for he had made up his mind that some public recognition of his favour was due to the unhappy lady. "The King is as fond of her as ever," Lord Minto recorded, "and has at last given her the rangership of Greenwich Park, which I am very glad of. They used to be very shabby and blackguard in refusing her half-roods of green under her windows; now the whole is at her own disposal."

The King was devoted not only to his daughter-in-law, but also to his granddaughter, who was a very pretty and attractive child. "The little Princess was there," Lord Minto wrote, referring to a visit to Blackheath in the summer of 1802; "amazingly clever and engaging. She sings French and German songs, plays on the piano, and dances, all extremely well, and only six years old." "A gay, sprightly child, with fair hair, blue eyes, and pretty features, but a rather moddled skin without colour," the Hon. Emma Sophia Cust (afterwards Lady Brownlow) described her at the same age, having seen the little girl at a Christmas children's party given by their Majesties at Frogmore. The Princess of Wales was devoted to her child, and tended her in infancy with her own hands. There has been preserved, unpublished, an interesting note from her Royal Highness written, probably in 1797, to a nurse:

MADAM, CARLTON HOUSE, 7 O'CLOCK.

I was up stairs when my dear little Charlott was undress'd and stay'd till she was in bed and the dear little Angle was remarcable well. I am much obliged to you for your great attention to her and hope you will not return at Eight Oclock if it is not convenient to your self as I am quite alone with my Lady's so I can go up stairs if any thing should be the matter and then I will lett you know. Hope to have the pleasure of seeing you much better tomorrow.

I am

CAROLINE.

It was with a very real distress that the Princess of Wales learnt in 1804 that the Prince claimed the privilege to educate their daughter. It was generally

Carlton House 7 Oclock
"

Madam

I was up stairs when my
Dear little Charlott was undress'd
and stay'd till she was in bed and
the Dear little Angle was remarcke
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you know I hope to have the
pleasure of seeing you much better
tomorrow.

I am

Caroline

FACSIMILE OF A LETTER WRITTEN BY THE PRINCESS OF WALES.
(*British Museum, Add. MSS.*, 24901).

surmised that this demand arose not from any interest in the child or affection for her, but from the wish to pain his consort. The King, however, was not desirous that the Princess Charlotte's education should be under the sole direction of the Prince, and he insisted that the Princess of Wales should have at least an equal right of control.

Later the King claimed for himself as sovereign the exclusive right, and stated that the little girl should become a child of the State. He pointed out to his son that precedent and law and the mother's wish were on his side. The Prince, in reply, urged that only strong particular reasons could justify even the King from taking the child from the father, since to do so assumed error and misconduct in the parent, and that " with prejudices so excited, perhaps artfully encouraged, it might not be easy afterwards to reconcile the filial reverence and obedience and duty of a child." The King, thinking of his son's general behaviour and of his treatment of his consort, retorted that " strong particular reasons " did exist, and forthwith appointed himself guardian of his grandchild. He installed the Princess Charlotte at Shrewsbury House, with the Countess of Elgin as Governess, gave the Princess of Wales free access to the child and consulted her as regards all subsequent arrangements.

The King to the Princess of Wales

WINDSOR CASTLE, *November 13th*, 1804.

MY DEAREST DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AND NIECE,

Yesterday I and the rest of my family had an interview with the Prince of Wales at Kew. Care

was taken on all sides to avoid all subjects of altercation or explanation, consequently the conversation was neither instructive nor entertaining, but it leaves the Prince of Wales in a position to shew whether his desire to return to his family is only verbal or real, which time alone can shew. I am not idle in my endeavours to make inquiries that may enable me to communicate some plan for the advantage of the dear child [in whom] you and me, with so much reason, must interest ourselves: and its affecting my having the happiness of living more with you is no small incentive to my forming some ideas on the subject: but you must depend on their being not decided upon without your thorough and cordial concurrence; for your authority, as mother, it is my object to support. Believe me, at all times,

My dearest Daughter-in-law and Niece,
Your most affectionate
Father-in-law and Uncle
GEORGE R.

The Princess of Wales rarely appeared in public, although occasionally she paid a visit to Covent Garden or Drury Lane. Indeed, during the eleven years she was domiciled there she seldom left Blackheath, except in the summer months when he would go to the seaside, usually to Margate or Ramsgate, but sometimes accepting the hospitality of her acquaintance elsewhere, as when in 1806 Mount Edgcumbe was placed at her disposal, and she stayed there for a fortnight, taking with her in her *suite* Lady Hester Stanhope, Colonel James Stanhope, Admiral Sir Samuel and Lady Hood, and Mrs. Fitzgerald.

The Princess of Wales to George Rose

My dear Sir, Rose Cottage, *May 1st*, 1806.

Encouraged by your so well-known good-nature, and as well by Lady Hester Stanhope, I resume my pen to ask of you a favour, which consists in lending me your little cottage at Christchurch, near Poole, for eight-and-forty hours, which fame has told me is beautiful.

The period of my intruding on you will be for the 21st or 22nd of this month. I now am setting off for Mount Edgcumbe with Lady Hester, and I hope that the variety of new scenes will be conducive to her health as well as to her spirits, which I found very indifferent; but between you and me, no wonder, after such a loss! * and not less to us; and depend upon it, my dear Sir, that our departed friend will remain immortal in our hearts, as I hope his loyal spirit will in the common rustic's heart.

If it were not too indiscreet of me, I would feel so thankful if you would still more heighten your goodness to me by informing me how dear, good, amiable, and for ever respectable Lord Melville is in health. I know that he bears with fortitude and with greatness of mind his very severe trial of adversity; which only an innocent and elevated mind could give him.†

Lady Hester has been kind enough to communicate your letter to me, my dear Sir, and I have only to add, that I never had any doubt of the very great difficulty to settle that very intricate business in the most amiable and comfortable way for all parties; but if

* Lady Hester Stanhope was a niece of William Pitt, who died January 23, 1806.

† Lord Melville was impeached by the House of Lords of "high crimes and misdemeanours," and the hearing was at this time in progress. He was acquitted by a great majority on June 12.

it should remain in your hands, I have all right to expect that the nation would do it with their usual justice and generosity. And believe me, my dear Sir, for ever with the highest regard and esteem,

Yours,

C. P.

Leading a secluded life, the Princess of Wales had to make for herself occupations. She was fond of writing, and, as the letters printed in this work show, she had an easy, slipshod style, instinct with humour. This talent she harnessed to the task of writing in a book she kept for the purpose her conception of the characters of the leading persons in England with whom, at one time or another, she was brought into contact. What has happened to this manuscript is unknown : it may have been destroyed, or it may have been lost, in which latter case it may perhaps yet see the light, which is certainly to be desired, for, according to Lady Charlotte Bury, the sketches were very spirited and made most piquant reading. Her Royal Highness was fond, too, of reading, and among the works in which she delighted were " Candide," Burke's speeches, the novels of Madame de Genlis, and the Margravine of Baireuth's memoirs. " She reads a great deal and buys all the new books," " Monk " Lewis said. During these years also she tried to improve her English under the instruction of one Giffadière—a strangely foreign name for an English tutor ; and she studied music under Thomas Atwood, and took lessons on the harp from Mrs. Ewles. Tourfionelli assisted her in painting, and she also derived some instruction in modelling in clay. That she took an interest in gardening and invented a new use for

pressed flowers we learn from Campe, who visited Blackheath and was entertained by the Princess when he was in England in 1803.

When I was at the Princess of Wales's residence at Blackheath [he noted in his "Travels through England"] she had the condescension to conduct me to a garden at some distance, which she had principally laid out herself, and which she superintended in such a complete sense of the word that no person presumed to do anything in it but what she herself directed. I admired the beautiful order and the careful cultivation of even the most insignificant spot; the judicious combination of the useful with the agreeable, which appeared so delightful wherever I cast my eyes. I was charmed with the neat borders of flowers between which we passed, and was doubly rejoiced to find them so small; because, as the Princess remarked, too much room ought not to be taken from the useful vegetables, merely for the purpose of pleasing the eye. I was transported with the elegance, taste, and convenience displayed in the Pavilion, in which the dignified owner, who furnished the plan and the directions for every part of it, had solved the problem, how a building of but two floors, on a surface of about eighteen feet square, could be constructed and arranged in such a manner that a small family, capable of limiting its desires, might find in it a habitation equally beautiful, tasteful, and commodious. The manner in which this has been effected deserves, in my opinion, the notice and admiration of professed architects.

The Princess showed Campe a table, which at a first glance he pronounced to be mosaic work, but which proved to be nothing of the sort. "It is nothing more than a square of ground glass, on which

I have fastened with gum different kinds of natural flowers, which were first carefully dried and pressed, and then turned the glass with the smooth side uppermost. The whole art, or rather the trifling degree of trouble which this easy operation requires, consists merely in the choice of the situation which must be given to each flower, so that one may be properly connected with the other, and that as small a vacancy as possible may remain between them." The portions of glass not covered were stained so as to give the appearance of stone.

Each and all of these occupations may have diverted the Princess, but she found her principal pleasure at Blackheath, as earlier at Brunswick, in children, and Campe gives an agreeable portrait of her in her rôle of adopted mother.

It is not the young and hopeful Princess, her daughter, whom she educated, but eight or nine poor orphan children, to whom she had the condescension to supply the place of a mother. Her own was the child of the State, and, according to the constitution of the country, must not, alas! be educated by herself. These poor children, on the other hand, were boarded by her with honest people in the neighbourhood. She herself not only directed everything relative to their education and instruction, but went every day to converse with them, and thus contribute towards the formation of their infant minds. Never while I live shall I forget the charming, the affecting scene which I had the happiness of witnessing when the Princess was pleased to introduce me to her little foster-children. We were sitting at table; the Princess and her friends were at breakfast, but I, in the German fashion, was taking my dinner. The

children appeared clothed in the cleanest, but, at the same time, in the simplest manner, just as the children of country people are in general dressed. They seemed perfectly ignorant of the high rank of their foster-mother, or rather not to comprehend it. The sight of a stranger somewhat abashed them; but their bashfulness soon wore off, and they appeared to be perfectly at home. Their dignified benefactress conversed with them in a lively, jocose, and truly maternal manner. She called to her first one, then another, and another, and among the rest a little boy, five or six years old, who had a sore upon his face. Many a parent of too delicate nerves would not have been able to look at her own child in this state without an unpleasant sensation. Not so the royal mother of these orphans. She called the boy to her, gave him a biscuit, looked at his face to see whether it had got any better, and manifested no repugnance when the grateful infant pressed her hand to his bosom. What this wise royal instructress said to me on this occasion is too deeply impressed upon my memory to be erased.

"People find fault with me," she said, "for not doing more for these children after I have taken them under my care. I ought, in their opinion, to provide them with more elegant and costly clothes, and to keep masters of every kind for them, that they may later make a figure as persons of refined education. However, I only laugh at this censure, for I know what I am about. It is not my intention to raise these children into a rank superior to that in which they are placed; in that rank I mean them to remain, and to become useful, virtuous, and happy members of society. The boys are destined to become expert seamen; and the girls skilful, sensible, industrious housewives—nothing more. I have them instructed in all that is really serviceable for either of these

destinations; but everything else is totally excluded from the plan of education which I have laid down for them. Those who are acquainted with the splendour of the higher classes, and have reflected upon it, will be well aware of the danger of taking children from the more happy condition of inferior rank for the purpose of raising them into the former, in spite of Providence and natural destination."

Of course the Princess did not talk like this, but Campe succeeded, in his own way, in conveying her ideas. "The boys shall serve the King," she said; and they entered the Navy. "The girl I took by a very romantic accident," she told Lady Charlotte Campbell, about 1810. "In the time of the disturbances in Ireland, a man and a woman, apparently of the better class, left a female infant with a poor old peasant woman, who lives at Blackheath, and with that infant, a sum of money sufficient to support it a certain time. But the time elapsed, the money was spent, and no one came to supply the old woman with means for the baby's future exigencies. So she came to me, and told her story, and asked what she should do. At first, I thought of putting the child to the parish; but somehow I could not bear that; so it ended in my taking charge of the infant entirely at my own expense. She is now at school at Bath, under the care of Mrs. Twiss, sister of Mrs. Siddons. I have not seen the child for five years, and do not mean to see her until she is grown up: she is now twelve years old." This *protégée*, it is said, accompanied the Princess when she went abroad, where she met and married a member of the household of the Duke of Brunswick. The marriage,

however, was unhappy, and some time afterwards she rejoined the Princess in Italy.

After a while the Princess found the monotony of the life at Blackheath almost unendurable, and she sighed, not so much for the gaieties to which she had been accustomed at her father's Court as for the intercourse with congenial spirits. The statesmen and their wives, who at first were almost the only visitors she received, soon wearied her; and about 1799 she began to introduce a livelier element into her society as an antidote to the unnatural dulness of her life. High spirits now reigned, and many of that large body of persons who cannot understand that laughter and the *joie de vivre* are, as often as not, quite harmless looked upon her Royal Highness with marked disapproval. Of discretion, as Lord Malmesbury had remarked years before, she had no knowledge, and certainly much that she said and did was indiscreet. She either could not or would not hold her tongue. "As soon as she grows intimate with any one she gives way to her natural feelings," Lady Charlotte Campbell regretted, admitting, however, that "there is an openness and candour in her conversation, which is very engaging." "Prudence is totally wanted in her," said Lord Minto sadly. "When her subject engages her, her eyes and countenance speak louder than many people . . . could bawl at the top of their voices." She who had been only too pleased to dismiss her solemn guests at the earliest possible moment, delighted in sitting up till all hours with her more entertaining associates, and of these those who came to dinner were often bade to stay to supper, over which she loved to linger. "The

Princess prolonged her pleasures until they became pains," it was written of her. "No appetite for converse, no strength of nerves, no love for any individual who might be present, could enable any person, *who was not royal* (they certainly are gifted with supernatural strength), to sit for five or six hours at table, and keep vigil till morning light. Some one, I remember, present that night, ventured to hint that morning was at hand. 'Ah!' said the Princess, 'God, He knows when we may all meet again—to tell you God's truth, when I am happy and comfortable, I could sit on for ever.'" The unconventional conduct in which she now indulged was reported, with much exaggeration doubtless, to the Prince of Wales, whose most courteous attention was at the command of any one who brought tales from Montague House. His Royal Highness so readily believed what he heard that in September 1804 a rumour flew round the town that the marriage of the Princess was to be impeached, and in October of that year Charles Abbot mentions that, "The Princess of Wales gives great uneasiness by her unguarded conduct." The trouble, from the Prince of Wales's point of view, was that he had no possible basis for action of any sort; but this deficiency he tried to overcome by the usual method employed by suspicious husbands. "My Lady dined with the Princess and a large party at Blackheath yesterday," Lord Sheffield wrote to his sister, Sarah Martha Holroyd, July 14, 1805. "There is reason to believe that some of her servants have been spies upon her conduct."

CHAPTER VI

"THE DELICATE INVESTIGATION"

1805–1806

Sir John and Lady Douglas settle at Blackheath in 1801—Their previous history—Lady Douglas and Admiral Sir (William) Sidney Smith—The Princess of Wales calls on the Douglases—She becomes intimate with Lady Douglas, but, on hearing that Lady Douglas's reputation was doubtful, terminates the acquaintance—Lady Douglas brings charges against her Royal Highness—The Duke of Kent's narrative of the incident—His mismanagement of the affair—Lady Douglas declares that the Princess of Wales had given birth to a second child—Extracts from her Statement—The Prince of Wales institutes an inquiry—"The Delicate Investigation"—The Commissioners' Report—The main accusation disproved—The Princess of Wales writes a letter of protest to the King—She complains of the informality of the investigation, and its secrecy—A second letter to the King—Extracts from the famous "Answer" to the Commissioners' Report—Lady Douglas exposed—What was the basis for Lady Douglas's Statement?—Had she been fooled by the Princess of Wales?—Her Royal Highness's love of mystification and of confounding her friends—Her short way with spies—An examination of Lady Douglas's conduct.

SHORTLY after the Princess of Wales was established at Montague House, Blackheath, there came to live in the neighbourhood Major-General Sir John and Lady Douglas. These persons played such an important part in the life of her Royal Highness that some account of them must necessarily be given. Lady Douglas's grandfather was Charles Barrow, an attorney at Gloucester, who, in consequence,

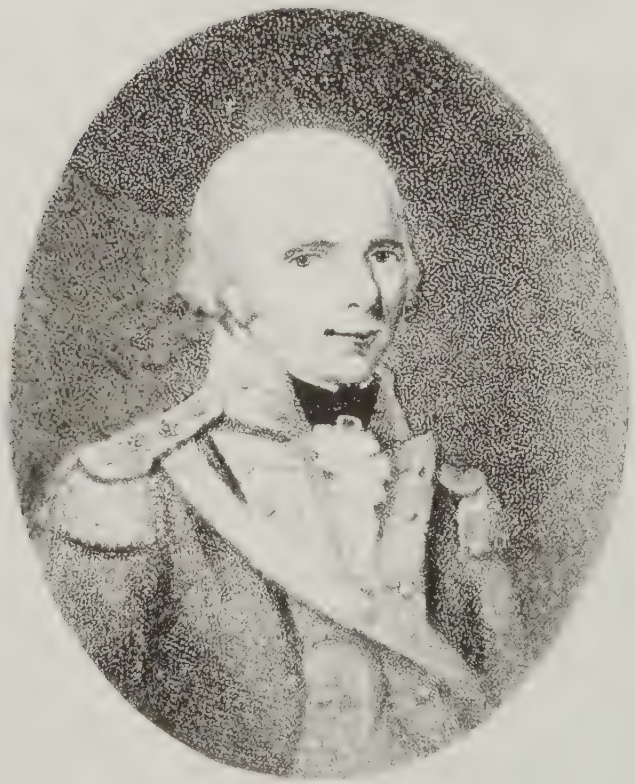
From an engraving by Mackenzie.

LADY DOUGLAS.

it is said, of his connection with the corporation of that city, was created baronet. Barrow never married, but he had several natural daughters, one of whom married a private soldier, named Hopkinson or Hepkinson. This man, who became a sergeant, obtained, doubtless through the influence of Sir Charles, the post of army-agent, and eventually rose to the rank of colonel, when he retired from the service, and, having acquired a handsome competence, spent his remaining years in comfort on an estate he had purchased near Gloucester. Hopkinson's daughter married John Douglas, who met her when he was a Lieutenant of Marines on recruiting service at Gloucester, and wooed and won her, although it was not until nine years later that they were united—a delay occasioned, probably, by the marine officer's lack of means to support a wife. Douglas went abroad on active service, and was with Rodney in the West Indies, with Keith at the capture of the Cape of Good Hope, and with Sir Sidney Smith at the siege of St. Jean d'Acre. After the fall of El Arish, he was sent to England with despatches, received by the King, who knighted him, and bestowed upon him a pension of £433 per annum, being partly a reward for his services and partly remuneration for the loss he had sustained by the blowing up of the *Queen Charlotte* at Syracuse. Contemporary accounts state that Lady Douglas was handsome, and appeared to be much younger than her husband, who was born in 1762; but it is suggested that the difference may not have been so considerable as it seemed, since the hardships of the campaigns in which Sir John had been engaged had affected his health and made him

look old before his time. "Her manners were commanding and tyrannical, and her disposition little inclined to brook any control," says John Wilks. "She appeared to have gained a complete ascendency over her husband, who, that he might live in peace, submitted to the government of his lady." In April 1801, about a couple of months after the birth of their first child, Charlotte Sidney, the Douglases took a house at Blackheath.

It is germane to the story to note that when Admiral Sir (William) Sidney Smith returned to England, covered with glory, after the surrender of Alexandria, in November 1801, he took up his residence with the Douglas's, at whose house he stayed alike when Sir John was there as when Lady Douglas was alone. The Douglases were poor; Sir Sidney was in possession of ample means. He took with him to Blackheath his carriage and horses and coachman and footman, and, when he was absent, left them at the disposal of his host and hostess. In all this, perhaps, there was nothing compromising, but other matters were brought to light when presently Lady Douglas thrust herself into the full glare of notoriety. "The attention of Lady Douglas to Sir Sidney Smith was unremitting," John Wilks, one of Queen Caroline's contemporary biographers, has recorded. "She very often took his breakfast to him herself, in his bedroom, at the same time neglecting similar attentions to Sir John. And not unfrequently did she omit to sleep with her husband during the time that Sir Sidney Smith was an inmate with them at Montpellier Row. Other circumstances have been mentioned which prove her particular partiality for



From an engraving by Edward Orme in the possession of A. M. Broadley, Esq., after a miniature by Pollock

SIR JOHN DOUGLAS.

Sir Sidney, which it is not necessary should be repeated here; but it is indisputably clear that the intimacy between this gentleman and the Douglases was of no ordinary kind." With Wilks's conclusion no one will be inclined to disagree.

The Princess of Wales—gregarious soul!—was always pleased to make acquaintance with those who lived near her. She had cemented a most agreeable friendship with John Julius Angerstein, who resided at "Woodlands," not far from Montague House, and had found this philanthropist and art-collector such good company that she was encouraged further to extend her local circle, with the unfortunate result that, walking one day on Blackheath, she called on the Douglases.

In the month of November [1801, Lady Douglas has recorded], when the ground was covered with snow, as I was sitting in my parlour, which commanded a view of the Heath, I saw, to my surprise, the Princess of Wales, elegantly dressed in a lilac satin pelisse, primrose-coloured half-boots, and a small lilac-satin travelling-cap, faced with sable, and a lady, pacing up and down before the house, and sometimes stopping, as if desirous of opening the gate in the iron railing to come in. At first I had no conception her Royal Highness really wished to come in, but must have mistaken the house for another person's, for I had never been made known to her, I did not know that she knew where I lived. I stood at my window looking at her; and, as she looked very much, from respect, courtsied (as I understood was customary); to my astonishment she returned my courtesy by a familiar nod, and stopped. Old Lady Stuart, a West Indian lady, who lived in my immediate neighbourhood,

and who was in her habit of coming to see me, was in the room, and said, "You should go out, her Royal Highness wants to come in out of the snow." Upon this I went out, and she came immediately to me, and said, "I believe you are Lady Douglas, and you have a very beautiful child; I should like to see it."

Very naturally, after this visit, the Princess invited Sir John and Lady Douglas to dinner. They came, and gradually a considerable degree of intimacy resulted. Her Royal Highness was sponsor to the Douglas's second child, Caroline Sidney; she made handsome presents to her godchild and also to her godchild's parents; and in March 1802 paid Lady Douglas the compliment of asking her to take the waiting for a fortnight for Mrs. Lisle, who had hurt her foot and was incapacitated. To all these overtures of friendship, Lady Douglas responded eagerly. This must be remembered, for, when the trouble came, Lady Douglas, in her Narrative, declared again and again that she accepted the Princess's advances reluctantly and with much hesitation and trepidation. They saw much of each other until Christmas 1803, when the Douglases went to Devonshire.

While they were away it came to the Princess's knowledge that Lady Douglas had cast reflections upon her Royal Highness's conduct, and further, that Lady Douglas's reputation was such that it was not desirable that the acquaintance should continue. This information was first conveyed to the Princess through the doubtful medium of an anonymous letter, but inquiries set on foot by her Royal Highness proved that the statements were well-founded. The next act in the drama is best told in

the narrative of the Duke of Kent, whose part was played in October or November 1804.

Narrative of the Duke of Kent

About a twelvemonth since, or thereabouts (for I cannot speak positively to the exact date), I received a note from the Princess of Wales, by which she requested me to come over to Blackheath, in order to assist her in arranging a disagreeable matter between her, Sir Sidney Smith, Sir John and Lady Douglas, the particulars of which she would relate to me when I should call.

I, in consequence, waited upon her, agreeably to her desire, a day or two after, when she commenced the conversation by telling me that she supposed I knew she had, at one time, lived with Lady Douglas on a footing of intimacy, but that she had had reason afterwards to repent having made her acquaintance, and was therefore rejoiced when she left Blackheath for Plymouth, as she conceived that circumstance would break off all further communication between her and that lady; that, however, contrary to her expectation, upon the return of Sir John and her from Plymouth to London, Lady Douglas had called and left her name two or three times, notwithstanding she must have seen that admission was refused her; that, having been confirmed in the opinion she had before had occasion to form of her ladyship, by an anonymous letter she had received, in which she was very strongly cautioned against renewing her acquaintance with her, both as being unworthy of her confidence, from the liberties she had allowed herself to take with the Princess's name, and the lightness of her character, she had felt herself obliged, as Lady Douglas would not take the hint that her visits were not wished for, to order Miss Vernon to write her a note, specifi-

cally telling her that they would in future be dispensed with; that the consequence of this had been an application, through one of her ladies, in the joint names of Sir Sidney Smith, Sir John and Lady Douglas, for an audience, to require an explanation of this, which they considered an affront; and that, being determined not to grant it, or suffer any unpleasant discussion upon the subject, she entreated me to take whatever steps I might judge best to put an end to the matter, and rid her of all further trouble about it; I stated, in reply, that I had no knowledge of either Sir John or Lady Douglas, and therefore could not in the *first* instance address myself to *them*; but that as I had *some* acquaintance with Sir Sidney Smith, and if the Princess was not averse to *that* channel, I would try what I could in *that* way effect.

This being assented to by the Princess, I took my leave, and, immediately on my return home, wrote a note to Sir Sidney, requesting him to call upon me as soon as he conveniently could, as I had some business to speak to him about. Sir Sidney, in consequence, called on me (I think) the next day, when I related to him the conversation, as above stated, that I had had with the Princess. After hearing all I had to say, he observed, that the Princess, in stating to me that *her* prohibition to Lady Douglas to repeat her visits at Blackheath had led to an application for an audience of her Royal Highness, had kept from me the *real* cause why he, as well as Sir John and Lady Douglas, had made it, as it originated in a most scandalous anonymous letter, of a nature calculated to set on Sir John and him to cut each other's throats, which, from the handwriting and style, they were both fully convinced was the production of the Princess herself. I naturally expressed my sentiments upon such conduct, on the part of the Princess, in terms of the strongest animadversion; but, nevertheless, anxious

to avoid the shameful *éclat* which the publication of such a fact to the world must produce; the effect, which its coming to the King's knowledge would probably have on his health, from the delicate state of his nerves, and all the additional misunderstandings between his Majesty and the Prince, which I foresaw would inevitably follow, were this fact, which would give the Prince so powerful a handle to express his feelings upon the countenance shewn by the King to the Princess, at a time when I knew him to be severely wounded by his Majesty's visits to Blackheath, on the one hand, and the reports he had received of the Princess's conduct on the other, to be brought to light, I felt it my bounden duty, as an honest man, to urge all these arguments with Sir Sidney Smith in the most forcible manner I was master of; adding also, as a further object, worthy of the most serious consideration, the danger of any appearance of ill-blood in the family at such an eventful crisis, and to press upon his mind the necessity of his using his best endeavours with Sir John Douglas, notwithstanding all the provocation that had been given them, to induce him to let the matter drop, and pursue it no further. Sir Sidney observed to me, that Sir John Douglas was a man whom, when once he had taken a line, from a principle of honour, it was very difficult to persuade him to depart from it; however, as he thought, that if *any* man could prevail upon him, *he* might flatter himself with being the most likely to persuade him, from the weight he had with him; he would immediately try how far he could gain upon him, by making use of those arguments I had brought forward to induce him to drop the matter altogether.

About four or five days after this, Sir Sidney called upon me again, and informed me that, upon making use with Sir John of these reasons, which I had autho-

rized his stating to be those of which I was actuated in making the request, that he would not press the business further, he had not been able to resist their force; but that the whole extent of promise he had been able to obtain of him, amounted to no more, than that *he* would, *under existing circumstances*, remain *quiet*, if left unmolested; for that he would *not* pledge himself not to bring the subject forward *hereafter*, when the same motive might no longer operate to keep him silent. This result I communicated, to the best of my recollection, the following day to the Princess, who seemed satisfied with it; and from that day to the present day (Nov. 10, 1805), I never heard the subject named again in any shape, until called upon by the Prince, to make known to *him* the circumstances of this transaction, as far as I could bring them to recollection. EDWARD.

It is clearly demonstrated, from the Duke of Kent's own statement, that the Princess of Wales was peculiarly unfortunate in her choice of a representative. She could not easily have found any one less able or more ungenerous than this well-meaning, kind-hearted Prince, who was, without the slightest difficulty, converted from her Royal Highness's advocate to her prejudiced critic. That Sir Sidney Smith was persuaded by the Douglases into the belief that the anonymous letter emanated from the Princess there is no reason to doubt; but surely it was the duty of the Duke to have been a little less credulous. The very reasons brought forward as evidence that they came from the Princess were so many reasons for doubt. An anonymous writer is careful not to disclose his or her identity. Yet the handwriting of the letters closely resembled the Princess's cali-

graphy, and to one of them was actually affixed her Royal Highness's seal. The Princess might often be indiscreet, but she could scarcely have been so foolish as to use her seal on the outside of an anonymous letter.* Whatever the Duke might have thought he should, before proceeding further, have made inquiry from the Princess as to the truth of the statement made by Sir Sidney Smith. Not only did he not do this, however, but, so far as can be gathered from his report, he never at any time informed her of the charge, but merely communicated the result of his intervention, that the Douglases and Sir Sidney Smith would trouble her no more unless she went out of her way to provoke them. Who wrote the letters was never discovered; but it is the opinion of the present writer—though he must be careful to state that it is merely a surmise, unsupported by evidence—that the letters were, as likely as not, the work of Lady Douglas, who thought thereby to secure for herself and her husband the support of Sir Sidney Smith. This is not so wild a suggestion as may appear at first sight, for it is generally agreed that the cause that moved Lady Douglas to propound schemes of vengeance upon the Princess was jealousy of Sir Sidney's attention to her Royal Highness.

It will have been observed that when Sir Sidney Smith had his interview with the Duke of Kent he, speaking on behalf of the Douglases and himself, referred only to the anonymous letters, and on neither occasion hinted at any misconduct (other than the alleged writing of those letters) on the part of the

* For the Princess's comment on the matter of these letters see vol. i. p. 135 of this work.

Princess. This is of particular importance, because, had Lady Douglas been in possession of any information on the subject, it is very far from probable that, when the matter of the letters arose, she would have kept the knowledge from her husband and from Sir Sidney Smith. Evidently Lady Douglas had thought that the accusation of having written the anonymous letters would be a great blow to the Princess; but her Royal Highness's prompt action in desiring the Duke of Kent to take the matter in hand had resulted in its causing her neither inconvenience nor damage (except such prejudice as may have been created against her in the Duke's mind). Lady Douglas, defeated in November 1804, kept quiet for a while; but during this period she considered what she could do to injure the Princess, and in a little more than a year she had, it cannot be said perfected, but drawn up her plan of campaign, the results of which were indeed far-reaching.

In the late autumn of 1805 Sir John Douglas, who occupied a post in the household of the Duke of Sussex, formulated to that Prince charges of adultery against the Princess of Wales, coupled with the assertion that her Royal Highness had in 1802 given birth at Blackheath to a child, known as William Austin. The Duke very rightly held—as, of course, Lady Douglas had anticipated—that this was a matter with which it was not possible for him to deal, and he deemed it to be his duty to inform the Prince of Wales. The Prince at once asked for a written statement of the charges against his consort, and this the Douglases provided on December 3. In the narrative drawn up by the Douglases occur the following passages:

From a print in the collection of A. M. Broadley, Esq.

GEORGE, PRINCE OF WALES.

His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales having judged proper to order me to detail to him, as Heir Apparent, the whole circumstances of my acquaintance with her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, from the day I first spoke with her to the present time, I felt it my duty as a subject to comply without hesitation with his Royal Highness's commands; and I did so, because I conceived, even putting aside the rights of an heir apparent, his Royal Highness was justified in informing himself as to the actions of his wife, who, from all the information he had collected, seemed so likely to disturb the tranquillity of the country; and it appeared to me that, in so doing, his Royal Highness evinced his earnest regard for the real interest of his country, in endeavouring to prevent such a person from perhaps, one day, placing a spurious heir upon the English throne, and which his Royal Highness has indeed a right to fear, and communicate to the Sovereign, as the Princess of Wales told me, "If she were discovered in bringing her son into the world, she would give the Prince of Wales the credit of it, for she had slept two nights in the year she was pregnant in Carlton House." . . .

Upon my return home [after having taken the waiting] the same apparent friendship continued, and in one of her Royal Highness's evening visits she told me, she was come to have a long conversation with me, that she had been in a great agitation, and I must guess what had happened to her. I guessed a great many things, but she said No, to them all, and then said I gave it up, for I had no idea what she could mean, and therefore might guess my whole life without success, "Well then, I must tell you," said her Royal Highness, "but I am sure you know all the while. I thought you had completely found me out, and therefore I came to you, for you looked droll when I called for ale and fried onions and potatoes, and

when I said I eat tongue and chicken at my breakfasts; that I was sure as my life you suspected me; tell me honestly, did you not?" I affected not to understand the Princess at all, and did not really comprehend her. She then said, "Well, I'll tell; I am with child, and the child came to life when I was breakfasting with Lady Willoughby." . . .

Upon my return to Blackheath in January, I called to pay my duty. I found her [Royal Highness] packing a small black box, and an infant sleeping on a sofa, with a piece of scarlet cloth thrown over it. She appeared confused, and hesitated whether she should be rude or kind, but recovering herself, chose to be the latter; said, she was happy to see me, and then taking me by the hand, led me to the sofa, and uncovering the child, said, "Here is the little boy. I had him two days after I saw you last; is not it a nice little child? the upper part of his face is very fine." She was going to have said more, when Mrs. Fitzgerald opened the door and came in. The Princess consulted what I had better have, what would be good for me. I declined anything, but she insisted upon it I should have some soup, said, "My dear Fitzgerald, pray go out, and order some nice brown soup to be brought here for Lady Douglas." I saw from this the Princess wished to have spoken to me more fully, and Mrs. Fitzgerald saw it likewise, for instead of obeying, she rung the bell for the soup, and then sat down to tell me the whole fable of the child having been brought by a poor woman from Deptford, whose husband had left her; that Mr. Stikeman, the page, had the honour of bringing it in, that it was a poor little ill-looking thing when first brought, but now, with such great care, was growing very pretty, and that as her Royal Highness was so good, and had taken the twins (whose father would not let them remain) and taken this, all the poor people

would be bringing children. The Princess now took the child up, and I was entertained the whole morning by seeing it fed, and *every service of every kind performed for it by her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales.*

Clearly the matter could not rest there. The serious allegation contained in the Narrative of the Douglases must be proved or disproved. An inquiry, the object of which was to obtain further information, was set on foot, and it was, curiously enough, entrusted to Sir John Douglas's solicitor, Lowten, instead of to an impartial person. Two servants of the Douglases were examined, but their depositions must have been either immaterial, or favourable to the Princess, because these were never published. Servants of the Princess, too, were examined, and hinted that their mistress had been unduly familiar with most of her male visitors: with Canning, with Sir Sidney Smith, with Captain Manby, with Thomas Lawrence, with Captain Hood. Never, if this evidence was to be believed, had there lived a woman more abandoned, nor one, it must also be noted, so desirous to compromise herself. Only, was the evidence of servants who had been in the Prince of Wales's employ since their youth to be trusted in a matter where to tell the truth might prejudice their future livelihood?

The Prince of Wales consulted Lord Thurlow, and then Sir Samuel Romilly, to whom was entrusted the conduct of the affair after he became Solicitor-General in the Administration of "All the Talents" in February 1806. Yet his Royal Highness did not show any great eagerness to proceed in the matter that so nearly affected his honour until, on May 18,

Romilly, at the instance of Lord Thurlow, told him that the information was too important to remain in his Royal Highness's possession without being acted upon; that he ought to communicate it to Mr. Fox, and consider what was to be done upon it; and that the information had remained already too long in his Royal Highness's possession not proceeded upon. The Prince presumedly had taken no steps because he was in doubt as to the authenticity of the statements; but, thus urged by his advisers, *plus royaliste que le roi*, he consented to do their will. Romilly then informed Lord Grenville of the salient points of the case, and he came to the conclusion that the birth of the child made it impossible to keep the matter private. It must, he declared, be made the subject of a parliamentary proceeding. For this, however, it was essential that the King's sanction should be obtained, and, in order to secure this, Romilly drew up a *précis* of the charges, which the Lord Chancellor (Erskine) read to his Majesty on May 26. Three days later the King, acting on the advice of his ministers, issued a warrant directing Lord Erskine, Lord Spencer (Secretary of State), Lord Grenville (Prime Minister), and Lord Ellenborough (Lord Chief Justice), to inquire into the conduct of the Princess of Wales, examine witnesses on oath, and to report to him the result of their investigations. It was at first proposed that Fox should be on the Commission, but on the score of business, health, and connection with the Princess, he declined being named.

The Commissioners met on June 1, no other persons being present except Romilly. The Princess of

Wales was not represented, nor, indeed, was she informed of the appointment of the Commission until some days after the sittings began, when on June 7 the Duke of Kent went to Blackheath and told her that reports very injurious to her reputation had been circulated, that the King had therefore commanded an inquiry to be held, and that the Commissioners had issued an order for six of her servants (Charlotte Sanders, Frances Lloyd, Mary Wilson, Sicard, Stikeman, and Roberts) to be brought before them. Her pages, Cole and Bidgood, had already appeared before the Commissioners. The Princess replied to his Royal Highness, that the Commissioners were welcome to examine all her servants if they thought proper. Mrs. Sophia Austin was also brought before the Commissioners, and, says Romilly, "The result of the examination was such as left a perfect conviction on my mind, and, I believe, on the minds of the four Lords, that the boy in question was the son of Sophia Austin; that he was born in Brownlow Street Hospital on 11 July, 1802; was taken by the Princess into her house on 15 November 1802, and had ever since been under her protection. Moreover," adds Romilly, "the evidence of all the servants as to the general conduct of the Princess of Wales was very favourable to her Royal Highness; and Lady Douglas's account was contradicted in many very important particulars." Not only Lady Douglas's account was contradicted, but the witnesses who had been examined by Lowden, when brought before the Commissioners, made statements at variance with their previous accounts, and they, too, were contradicted in many very important particulars. It is

not surprising that the Commissioners' Report, dated July 14, should completely exonerate her Royal Highness on the more serious charge.

We are happy to declare to your Majesty our perfect conviction that there is no foundation whatever for believing that the child now with the Princess is the child of her Royal Highness, or that she was delivered of any child in the year 1802; nor has anything appeared to us which would warrant the belief that she was pregnant in that year, or at any other period within the compass of our inquiries.

The identity of the child, now with the Princess, its parentage, the place and date of its birth, the time and circumstances of its being first taken under her Royal Highness's protection, are all established by such a concurrence both of positive and circumstantial evidence, as can, in our judgment, leave no question on this part of the subject. That child was, beyond all doubt, born in the Brownlow-street hospital, on the 11th day of July, 1802, of the body of Sophia Austin, and was first brought to the Princess's house in the month of November following. Neither should we be more warranted in expressing any doubt as to the alleged pregnancy of the Princess, as stated in the original declarations—a fact so fully contradicted, and by so many witnesses, to whom, if true, it must in various ways have been known, that we cannot think it entitled to the smallest credit. The testimony on these two points is contained in the annexed depositions and letters. We have not partially abstracted them in this report, lest, by an unintentional omission, we might weaken their effect; but we humbly offer to your Majesty this our clear and unanimous

judgment upon them, formed on full deliberation, and pronounced without hesitation on the result of the whole inquiry.

If the Report had ended here, justice would have been done, and probably no more would have been heard of the matter; but, in spite of Romilly's statement to the effect that all the servants' evidence was favourable to the Princess, the Commissioners proceeded to cast serious reflections upon her conduct.

We do not, however, feel ourselves at liberty, much as we should wish it, to close our report here. Besides the allegations of the pregnancy and delivery of the Princess, those declarations on the whole of which your Majesty has been pleased to command us to inquire and report, contain, as we have already remarked, other particulars respecting the conduct of her Royal Highness, such as must, especially considering her exalted rank and station, necessarily give occasion to very unfavourable interpretations. From the various depositions and proofs annexed to this report . . . your Majesty will perceive that several strong circumstances of this description have been positively sworn to by witnesses, who cannot, in our judgment, be suspected of any unfavourable bias, and whose veracity, in this respect, we have seen no ground to question. On the precise bearing and effects of the facts thus appearing it is not for us to decide; these we submit to your Majesty's wisdom; but we conceive it to be our duty to report on this part of the inquiry as distinctly as on the former facts; that as, on the one hand, the facts of pregnancy and delivery are to our minds satisfactorily disproved, so, on the other hand, we think, that the circumstances to which we now refer, particularly those stated to have passed

between her Royal Highness and Captain Manby, must be credited till they receive some decisive contradiction; and, if true, are justly entitled to the most serious consideration.

It was in keeping with the malice that prompted the proceedings and did not even allow the accused to be present in person or represented by counsel that, although the Report was issued on July 14, one copy of it was sent to the person principally concerned until August 11.

The Princess of Wales to the King

SIRE, BLACKHEATH, *August* 12, 1806.

With the deepest feelings of gratitude to your Majesty, I take the first opportunity to acknowledge having received, on yesterday only, the Report from the Lords Commissioners, which was dated from the 14th of July. It was brought by Lord Erskine's footman, directed to the Princess of Wales; besides a note enclosed, the contents of which were, that Lord Erskine sent the evidences and report by commands of his Majesty. I have reason to flatter myself that the Lords Commissioners would not have given in the Report, before they had been properly informed of various circumstances, which must for a feeling and delicate-minded woman, be very unpleasant to have spread, without having the means to exculpate herself. But I can, in the face of the Almighty, assure your Majesty that your daughter-in-law is innocent, and her conduct unquestionable; free from all the indecorums and improprieties, which are imputed to her at present by the Lords Commissioners, upon the evidence of persons who speak as falsely as Sir John and Lady Douglas themselves. Your Majesty can be sure that I shall be anxious to

give the most solemn denial in my power, to all the scandalous stories of Bidgood and Cole; to make my conduct be cleared in the most satisfactory way, for the tranquillity of your Majesty, for the honour of your illustrious family, and the gratification of your afflicted daughter-in-law. In the meantime I can safely trust your Majesty's gracious justice to recollect, that the whole of the evidence on which the Commissioners have given credit to the infamous stories charged against me, was taken behind my back, without my having any opportunity to contradict or explain anything, or even to point out those persons, who might have been called, to prove the little credit which was due to some of the witnesses, from their connexion with Sir John and Lady Douglas; and the absolute falsehood of parts of the evidence, which could have been completely contradicted. Oh! gracious King, I now look for that happy moment, when I may be allowed to appear again before your Majesty's eyes, and receive once more the assurance from your Majesty's own mouth that I have your gracious protection; and that you will not discard me from your friendship, of which your Majesty has been so condescending as to give me so many marks of kindness; and which must be my only support, and my only consolation, in this country. I remain, with sentiments of the highest esteem, veneration, and unfeigned attachment, Sire,

Your Majesty's most dutiful, submissive, and humble daughter-in-law and subject,

CAROLINE.

To this letter the King sent no reply, and after waiting several days the Princess wrote again to his Majesty, this time through the medium of the Lord Chancellor, because her communication related to papers that had been sent through him.

The Princess of Wales to the King

SIRE, *Aug. 17th*, 1806.

Upon receiving the copy of the Report, made to your Majesty, by the commissioners, appointed to inquire into certain charges against my conduct, I lost no time, in returning to your Majesty, my heartfelt thanks, for your Majesty's goodness in commanding that copy to be communicated to me.

I wanted no adviser, but my own heart, to express my gratitude for the kindness, and protection which I have uniformly received from your Majesty. I needed no caution or reserve, in expressing my confident reliance, that that kindness and protection would not be withdrawn from me, on this trying occasion; and that your Majesty's justice would not suffer your mind to be affected, to my disadvantage, by any part of a Report, founded upon partial evidence, taken in my absence, upon charges, not yet communicated to me, until your Majesty had heard, what might be alleged, in my behalf, in answer to it. But your Majesty, will not be surprised, nor displeased, that I, a woman, a stranger to the laws and usages of your Majesty's kingdom, under charges, aimed, originally, at my life, and honour, should hesitate to determine, in what manner I ought to act, even under the present circumstances, with respect to such accusations, without the assistance of advice in which I could confide. And I have had submitted to me the following observations, respecting the copies of the papers with which I have been furnished. And I humbly solicit from your Majesty's gracious condescension and justice, a compliance with the requests, which arise out of them.

In the first place, it has been observed to me, that these copies of the Report, and of the accompanying

papers, have come unauthenticated by the signature of any person, high, or low, whose veracity, or even accuracy, is pledged for their correctness, or to whom resort might be had, if it should be necessary, hereafter, to establish, that these papers are correct copies of the originals. I am far from insinuating that want of such attestations was intentional. No doubt it was omitted through inadvertence; but its importance is particularly confirmed by the state, in which the copy of Mrs. Lisle's examination has been transmitted to me. For in the third page of that examination there have been two erasures; on one of which, some words have been, subsequently introduced apparently in a different hand-writing from the body of the examination; and the passage as it stands, is probably incorrect, because the phrase is unintelligible. And this occurs in an important part of her examination.

The humble, but earnest request, which I have to make to your Majesty, which is suggested by this observation, is, that your Majesty would be graciously pleased to direct, that the Report, and the papers which accompany it, and which, for that purpose, I venture to transmit to your Majesty with this letter, may be examined, and then returned to me, authenticated as correct, under the signature of some person, who, having attested their accuracy may be able to prove it.

In the second place, it has been observed to me, that the Report proceeds, by reference to certain written declarations, which the commissioners describe as the necessary foundation of all their proceedings, and which contain, as I presume, the charge or information against my conduct. Yet copies of these written declarations have not been given to me. They are described indeed, in the Report, as consisting in certain statements, respecting my conduct,

imputing not only, gross impropriety of behaviour, but expressly asserting facts of the most confirmed, and abandoned criminality, for which, if true, my life might be forfeited. These are stated to have been followed by declarations from other persons who, though not speaking to the same facts, had related other particulars, in themselves extremely suspicious, and still more so, as connected with the assertions already mentioned.

On this, it is observed to me, that it is most important that I should know the extent, and the particulars of the charges or informations against me, and by what accusers they have been made; whether I am answering the charges of one set of accusers, or more. Whether the authors of the original declarations, who may be collected from the Report to be Sir John and Lady Douglas, are my only accusers; and the declarations which are said to have followed, are the declarations of persons adduced as witnesses by Sir John and Lady Douglas to confirm their accusation; or whether such declarations are the charges of persons, who have made themselves also, the authors of distinct accusations against me.

The requests, which, I humbly hope, your Majesty will think reasonable, and just to grant, and which are suggested by these further observations are,

First, That your Majesty would be graciously pleased to direct, that I should be furnished with copies of these declarations; and, if they are rightly described in the Report, as the necessary foundation of all the proceedings of the commissioners, your Majesty could not, I am persuaded, but have graciously intended, in directing that I should be furnished with a copy of the report, that I should also see this essential part of the proceedings, the foundation on which it rests.

Secondly, That I may be informed whether I have

one or more, and how many accusers; and who they are; as the weight and credit of the accusation cannot but be much affected by the quarter from whence it originates.

Thirdly, That I may be informed of the time when the declarations were made. For the weight and credit of the accusation must, also, be much affected, by the length of time which my accusers may have been contented to have been the silent depositories of those heavy matters of guilt, and charge; and,

Lastly, That your Majesty's goodness will secure to me a speedy return of these papers, accompanied, I trust, with the further information which I have solicited; but at all events a speedy return of them. And your Majesty will see, that it is not without reason, that I make this last request, when your Majesty is informed, that, though the report appears to have been made upon the 14th of July, yet it was not sent to me till the 11th of the present month. A similar delay I should, of all things, deplore. For it is with reluctance, that I yield to those suggestions, which have induced me to lay these my humble requests before your Majesty, since they must, at all events, in some degree, delay the arrival of that moment, to which I look forward with so earnest and eager an impatience; when I confidently feel, I shall completely satisfy your Majesty, that the whole of these charges are alike unfounded; and are all parts of the same conspiracy against me. Your Majesty, so satisfied, will, I can have no doubt, be as anxious as myself to secure to me that redress, which the laws of your kingdom (administering, under your Majesty's just dispensation, equal protection and injustice to every description of your Majesty's subjects) are prepared to afford to those who are so deeply injured as I have been. That I have in this case the strongest claims to your Majesty's

justice, I am confident I shall prove; but I cannot, as I am advised, so satisfactorily establish that claim, till your Majesty's goodness shall have directed me to be furnished with an authentic statement of the actual charges against me, and that additional information, which it is the object of this letter most humbly, yet earnestly, to implore. I am, Sire,

Your Majesty's most dutiful, submissive, and humble daughter-in-law,

C. P.

After an interchange of letters with the Lord Chancellor, an authenticated copy of the Report and the witnesses' depositions was sent to the Princess, and her advisers at once began to prepare a reply that should be a vindication of her Royal Highness. This letter, which is far too long to insert in the body of this narrative, was drawn up by Spencer Perceval, with the assistance of Lord Eldon and Thomas Plumer.* It was an admirable piece of work, and not even Romilly could withhold his praise, albeit he gave it somewhat grudgingly. "Instead of a dignified defence of an injured and calumniated Princess, it is a long, elaborate, and artificial pleading of an advocate," he wrote in his Diary, November 27, 1806. "As a pleading, however, it is conducted with great art and ability. It is manifestly intended to be at some time or other published, and is likely, when published, to make a strong impression in favour of the Princess." The Princess's friends naturally were less reserved in their appreciation, as one example must suffice to show.

* Sir Thomas Plumer (1753–1824), Solicitor-General in the Duke of Portland's Administration 1807, Attorney-General 1812, Master of the Rolls 1818.

Sir Vicary Gibbs to the Right Hon. George Rose.*

HAYES COMMON, BROMLEY, *Sept. 28th*, 1806.

The Answer is finished, and I only wish that his Majesty may be prevailed upon to give his personal attention to it, and form his own judgment upon the case. Perceval has done it most incomparably. Every guard is placed, as you suggested, against the renewal of the same sort of inquiry, which was a point which required some delicacy, as it was necessary, in many instances, to complain that the inquiry which took place was calculated to produce a false impression by being left short, and to cast suspicions upon the conduct of the party accused, which a few further questions must necessarily have cleared up. To avoid, therefore, any insidious offer of renewing it, that these defects may be supplied, there is a strong protestation against such a measure, pointing out the gross injustice, and throwing doubts upon the legality of it. Her Royal Highness desires Lord Eldon to present her answer to the King, and I shall be glad to hear that this is permitted by his Majesty. It was impossible to avoid making strong observations upon the conduct of the Commissioners; in truth, the justice of the conclusions which the Report adopts could not be effectually attacked without showing that they have been at least inattentive to many material facts which they either knew or had the means of knowing. The greatest respect is observed towards them in expression, and their oversights are always attributed to their constant occupation in the business of their respective offices.

One of the points of the letter, which was dated

* Sir Vicary Gibbs (1751–1820), barrister, M.P. for Totnes 1804, Solicitor-General 1805–6, Attorney-General 1807–12, Judge of Common Pleas 1812; subsequently held high judicial offices.

October 2, 1806, was a well-argued protest against the form of the Commission which examined the conduct of the Princess.

Upon the question, how far the advice is agreeable to law, under which it was recommended to your Majesty to issue this warrant, or commission, not countersigned, nor under seal, and without any of your Majesty's advisers, therefore, being on the face of it responsible for its issuing, I am not competent to determine. And undoubtedly considering that the two high legal authorities, the Lord Chancellor, and the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, consented to act under it, it is with the greatest doubt and diffidence, that I can bring myself to express any suspicion of its illegality. But if it be, as I am given to understand it is, open to question, whether, consistently with law, your Majesty should have been advised to command, by this warrant or commission, persons, not to act in any known character, as secretaries of state, as privy councillors, as magistrates otherwise empowered; but to act as commissioners, and under the sole authority of such warrant, to enquire (without any authority to hear and determine any thing upon the subject of those inquiries) into the known crime of high treason, under the sanction of oaths, to be administered by them, as such commissioners, and to report the result thereof to your Majesty. If, I say, there can be any question upon the legality of such a warrant or commission, the extreme hardship, with which it has operated upon me, the extreme prejudice which it has done to my character, and to which such a proceeding must ever expose the person who is the object of it, obliges me, till I am fully convinced of its legality, to forbear from acknowledging its authority; and, with all humility and deference to your Majesty, to

protest against it, and against all the proceedings under it.

If this, indeed, were matter of mere form, I should be ashamed to urge it. But the actual hardships and prejudice which I have suffered by this proceeding, are most obvious. For, upon the principal charge against me, the Commissioners have most satisfactorily, and "without the least hesitation," for such is their expression, reported their opinion of its falsehood. Sir John and Lady Douglas, therefore, who have sworn to its truth, have been guilty of the plainest falsehood, yet upon the supposition of the illegality of this commission, their falsehood must, as I am informed, go unpunished. Upon that supposition, the want of legal authority in the Commissioners to inquire and administer an oath, will render it impossible to give to this falsehood the character of perjury. But this is by no means the circumstance which I feel the most severely. Beyond the vindicating of my own character, and the consideration of my providing for my future security, I can assure your Majesty, that the punishment of Sir John and Lady Douglas would afford me no satisfaction. It is not, therefore, with regard to that part of the charge which is negatived, but with respect to those which are sanctioned by the Report, those which, not aiming at my life, exhaust themselves upon my character, and which the Commissioners have, in some measure, sanctioned by their Report, that I have the greatest reason to complain.

Had the Report sanctioned the principal charge, constituting a known legal crime, my innocence would have emboldened me, at all risks (and to more, no person has ever been exposed from the malice, and falsehood of accusers), to have demanded that trial, which could legally determine upon the truth or falsehood of such charge. Though I should even then indeed have had some cause to complain, because I

should have gone to that trial, under the prejudice, necessarily raised against me, by that Report; yet into a proceeding before the just, open, and known tribunals of your Majesty's kingdom, I should have had a safe appeal from the result of an *ex parte* investigation. An investigation which has exposed me to all the hardships of a *secret* inquiry, without giving me the benefit of a *secrecy*; and to all the severe consequences of a public investigation, in point of injury to my character, without affording me any of its substantial benefits, in point of security. But the charges, which the Commissioners do sanction by the Report, describing them with a mysterious obscurity and indefinite generality, constitute, as I am told, no legal crime. They are described as "instances of great impropriety and indecency of behaviour" which must "occasion the most unfavourable interpretations," and they are reported to your Majesty, and they are stated to be, "circumstances which must be credited till they are decisively contradicted."

From this opinion, this judgment of the Commissioners, bearing so hard upon my character (and that a female character, how delicate, and how easily to be affected by the breath of calumny your Majesty well knows) I can have no appeal. For as the charges constitute no legal crimes, they cannot be the subject of any legal trial. I can call for no trial. I can therefore have no appeal; I can look for no acquittal. Yet this opinion, or this judgment, from which I can have no appeal, has been pronounced against me upon mere *ex parte* investigation.

The only other point made in the letter, which can here be considered, was the comment on the declaration in the Report, that, "In the painful situation in which his Royal Highness was placed, by

these communications [from Sir John and Lady Douglas], . . . his Royal Highness had adopted the only course which could, in our judgment, with propriety be followed."

The Commissioners, your Majesty observes, going, they must permit me to say, a little out of their way, begin their report by expressing a clear and decided opinion, that his Royal Highness [the Prince of Wales] was properly advised (for your Majesty will undoubtedly conclude, that upon a subject of this importance, his Royal Highness could not but have acted by the advice of others) in referring this complaint to your Majesty, for the purpose of its undergoing the investigation which has followed. And, unquestionably, if the charges referred to in this report, as made by Sir John and Lady Douglas, had been presented under circumstances, in which any reasonable degree of credit could be given to them, or even if they had not been presented in such a manner as to impeach the credit of the informers and to bear internal evidence of their own incredibility, I should be the last person who would be disposed to dispute the wisdom of the advice which led to make them the subject of the gravest and most anxious inquiry. And your Majesty, acting upon a mere abstract of the declarations, which was all that by the recital of the warrant appears to have been laid before your Majesty, undoubtedly could not but direct an inquiry into my conduct. For though I have not been furnished with that abstract, yet I must presume that it described the criminatory contents of these declarations, much in the same manner as they are stated in the report. And the criminatory part of the declarations, if viewed without reference to those traces of malice and resentment with which the declarations of Sir John and Lady Douglas abound; if abstracted from all these

circumstances, which shew the extreme improbability of the story, the length of time which my accusers had kept my alleged guilt concealed, the contradictions observable in the declarations of the other witnesses, all which I submit to your Majesty, are to an extent to cast the greatest discredit upon the truth of these declarations ;—abstracted, I say, from these circumstances, the criminatory parts of which were unquestionably such as to have placed your Majesty under the necessity of directing some inquiry concerning them. But that those, who had the opportunity of reading the long and malevolent narration of Sir John and Lady Douglas, should not have hesitated before they gave any credit to it, is matter of the greatest astonishment to me.

The improbability of the story would of itself, I should have imagined (unless they believed me to be as insane as Lady Douglas insinuates), have been sufficient to have staggered the belief of any unprejudiced mind. For to believe that story, they were to begin with believing that a person guilty of so foul a crime, so highly penal, so fatal to her honour, her station, and her life, should gratuitously and uselessly have confessed it. Such a person under the necessity of concealing her pregnancy might have been indispensably obliged to confide her secret with those, to whom she was to look for assistance in concealing its consequences. But Lady Douglas, by her own account, was informed by me of this fact, for no purpose whatever. She makes me, as those who read her declarations cannot fail to have observed, state to her that she should, on no account, be intrusted with any part of the management of which the birth was to be concealed. They were to believe also, anxious as I must have been to have concealed the birth of any such child, I had determined to bring it up in my own house ; and what would exceed, as I should imagine,

the extent of all human credulity, that I had determined to suckle it myself; that I had laid my plan, if discovered, to have imposed it upon his Royal Highness [the Prince of Wales] as his child. Nay, they were to believe that I had stated, and that Lady Douglas had believed the statement to be true, that I had in fact attempted to suckle it, and only gave up that part of my plan because it made me nervous, and was too much for my health. And, after all this, they were then to believe, that having made Lady Douglas thus unnecessarily the confidante of this important and dangerous secret; having thus put my character and my life in her hands, I sought an occasion wantonly, and without provocation, from the mere fickleness and wilfulness of my own mind, to quarrel with her, to insult her openly and violently in my own house, to endeavour to ruin her reputation; to expose her in infamous and indecent drawings inclosed in letters to her husband. The letters indeed are represented to have been anonymous, but, though anonymous, they are stated to have been written with my own hand, so undisguised in penmanship and style, that every one who had the least acquaintance with either could not fail to discover them, and (as if it were through fear lest it should not be sufficiently plain from whom they came) that I had sealed them with a seal which I had shortly before used on an occasion of writing to her husband.

All this they were to believe upon the declaration of a person, who, with all that loyalty and attachment which she expresses to your Majesty and his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, with all her obligations to the whole of the royal family (to whom she expressed herself to be bound by ties of respectful regard and attachment which nothing can ever break); with all the dread of the mischievous consequences to the country, which might arise from the disputed

succession to the crown, on the pretensions of an illegitimate child of mine, nevertheless continued, after this supposed avowal of my infamy, and my crime, after my supposed acknowledgment of the birth of this child, which was to occasion all this mischief, to preserve, for near a twelvemonth, her intimacy and apparent friendship with me. Nay, for two years more, after that intimacy had ceased, after that friendship had been broken off by my alleged misbehaviour to her, continued thus faithful to my secret, and never disclosed it till (as her declaration states it) the Princess of Wales recommenced a fresh torrent of outrage against Sir John; and Sir John discovered that she was attempting to undermine his and Lady Douglas's character.

Those, then, who had the opportunity of seeing the whole of this narrative, having had their jealousy awakened by these circumstances to the improbability of the story, and to the discredit of the informer, when they came to observe how maliciously every circumstance that malice could suggest, as most calculated to make a woman contemptible and odious, was scraped and heaped up together in this narrative, must surely have had their eyes opened to the motives of my accusers, and their minds cautioned against giving too easy a credit to their accusation, when they found my conversation to be represented as most loose and infamous; my mind uninstructed, and unwilling to learn; my language with regard to your Majesty and the whole of your royal family, foully disrespectful and offensive; and all my manners and habits of life most disgusting, I should have flattered myself that I could not have been, in character, so wholly unknown to them, but that they must have observed a spirit, and a colouring at least in this representation, which must have proved much more against the disposition and character of the informers, and the

quality of their information, than against the person who was the object of their charge. But when, in addition to all this, the declaration states, that I had, with respect to my unfortunate and calamitous separation from his Royal Highness, stated that I had acknowledged myself to have been the aggressor from the beginning, and myself alone; and when it further states, that if any other woman had so played and sported with her husband's comfort and popularity, she would have been turned out of his house, or left alone in it, and have deservedly forfeited *her place in society*; and further still, when alleging that I had once been desirous of procuring a separation from his Royal Highness, and had pressed former Chancellors to accomplish this purpose, it flippantly adds, that "The Chancellor may now, perhaps, be able to grant her request," the malicious object of the whole must surely have been most obvious.

If, to save argument, the Commissioners' statement be accepted, that the Prince of Wales behaved in the only way possible when he put the Douglases' Narrative before the King, there can, at least, be no doubt whatever that the King's advisers cannot be exonerated from blame. If they had not been desirous to pander to the Prince's hatred of his consort, if the humiliation of the Princess rather than the discovery of the truth had not been their object, they would surely have suggested to his Majesty that, as a first step, a responsible person should be sent to her Royal Highness to inquire as to the parentage of the child alleged to be hers. It may, of course, be urged by those who hold the view that the ministers acted wisely, that if the child had been brought into the world by the Princess, that royal lady would have

been prepared with a false statement. It would, however, have been easy to check any statement she made, and then, if it was disproved, would have been the time to institute such a formal proceeding as the appointment of a Commission; while, if it was true, nothing need have been heard of the matter outside the small number of persons actually concerned. Even had the Princess been informed of the charges brought against her, as was, indeed, indisputably her right, the Douglases would immediately have been discredited, and there would have been no need for "The Delicate Investigation," as it has been styled. By either of these simple, straightforward courses the scandal would have been averted, for it is inconceivable that the Princess would have made any mystery about the origin of the child she had adopted.

Here, before going any further, may be faced the question that must arise in the minds of all readers: Was Lady Douglas's Statement—it may be called Lady Douglas's Statement, for Sir John seems to have been his wife's creature in the matter—a lie from beginning to end? Did she invent the alleged conversation with the Princess about her Royal Highness being with child? Did the Princess say something, upon which basis Lady Douglas fabricated her Narrative? Did the Princess deliberately deceive Lady Douglas? If Lady Douglas invented the story, her action can be explained by her jealousy of Sir Sidney Smith's attentions to her Royal Highness. It is not so easy to find an explanation for the Princess, if she made up the story. And yet, delving below the surface, a number of possible elucidations present

themselves. The Princess may have said that she was pregnant to shock Lady Douglas, who affected in her Royal Highness's company a primness that may well have irritated that lady, who, not the most delicate-minded of persons, loved to shock the ladies around her who unnecessarily obtruded their virtue. Or something may have occurred to make her who was, and knew she was, surrounded by spies suspect Lady Douglas's loyalty, and so she told this story to test the woman who posed as a friend. If she did herself invent the story, it was as crass a folly as has ever been recorded in the annals of biography. Either of these theories is in keeping with her Royal Highness's character, who, like Lord Byron, loved to tell fables about herself, and would in this way often indulge her antic humour. Thus, she would sometimes confound her visitors by saying, "I have nine children." She would then laugh at their amazement, and explain, "It is true, upon honour. That is to say, I take care of eight boys and a girl"—referring to the protégés described by Campe. Certainly her Royal Highness delighted in mystification. She let people suppose that she used to employ these lads to carry love-letters, and, by way of encouraging this delusion, in the presence of others she would tell one of the boys to take a note to Captain Manby, and on no account to let it fall into the hands of any one else —albeit the *billet-doux* might be but an invitation to dinner. It was the same spirit that induced her one night, when some one was present whom she suspected of carrying tales from Blackheath to Carlton House, to order a decanter filled with cold tea, of which she drank copiously in order that the spy might report that

she had developed yet another vice. As a matter of fact, she never touched wine. She delighted to confound those with whom she conversed, and not even her dear Lady Charlotte Campbell was immune. That Lady Charlotte had not a grain of humour in her composition made the sport the more amusing.

Her Royal Highness [Lady Charlotte Campbell recorded in her Diary] swore to me, as she was standing by the fire the other day, *à propos des bottes*, that Willikin was *not her* son. "No," said she, "I would tell you if he was. No, if such little accident had happened, I would not hide it from you. He is not William Austin, though, but *avouez-moi*; it was very well managed that nobody should know who he really is, nor shall they till after my death." I replied, that I thought it was nobody's business who the boy was, and that I, for one, had no curiosity to know. "That is for why I tell you," replied the Princess. "Then somebody ask me who Willikin is de child of. De person say to me, '*Dey* do say, he is your Royal Highness's child. I answered, 'Prove it, and he shall be your King.'"

She takes great pleasure in making her auditor stare. After a pause, she said, "Poor dear Willikin, I am so sorry he is growing big, but I am determined to have *another* little boy; I must always have a child in the house." I lifted my eyes to her person; I really fancied I saw the full meaning of her words; but she met my glance with a steady composure which reassured me; for I thought no one could look so calm, so bold, were there anything to be ashamed of; and I replied, "But, Madam, you have the same interest in Willikin that ever you had." "Oh, yes, to be sure, I love him dearly, but I must have a *little child*; he is growing too big, too much of a man."

It is possible, then, even if improbable, some such conversation as that recorded by Lady Douglas may have taken place. That Lady Douglas was sent by the Prince of Wales to spy upon the Princess, as some writers have contended, is not, however, a theory supported by the subsequent events. Had Lady Douglas been a spy, after this conversation she would at once have communicated with her employers and the Princess would have been watched. Then it would have been discovered that her Royal Highness did not give birth to a child, and there would have been no "Delicate Investigation." But Lady Douglas did not at once report this conversation of 1802—though to her intimates she may thereafter have assumed an "I could an' I would" attitude when the Princess's name was mentioned; and she made no use of the knowledge she supposed she had acquired until more than three years later, when either from revenge, or perhaps to throw her husband off the track of her relations with Sir Sidney Smith, or from a combination of these reasons, she entrusted her secret to Sir John, and, through him, conveyed it to the Duke of Sussex as the most direct channel to the Prince of Wales that was at her disposal. So far, then, Lady Douglas was guilty of treachery alone; but when she came to make a formal statement there can be no doubt that, even if the Princess had told her this story, she elaborated the story with all sorts of circumstantial details, and thus added perjury to the other sin.

CHAPTER VII

THE SEQUEL TO "THE DELICATE INVESTIGATION"

1807

The Princess, receiving no reply to her Statement of the case, again addresses the King—The King refers the matter to the Cabinet—The Cabinet reluctantly expresses an opinion—It confirms the acquittal of her Royal Highness on the criminal charge—Accuses Lady Douglas of perjury, but censures the Princess for levities—The King invites her Royal Highness to Court—The incident generally regarded as closed—It is, however, reopened by the Prince of Wales—The King thereupon temporarily withdraws his invitation to the Princess—The Princess's indignant protests—She states that she will appeal to the public, and announces to the King her intention to publish the Statement of her case—This threat carries consternation into the enemies' camp—Correspondence between the Princess and the King—"*The* Book" drawn up by Perceval—On the eve of publication the Grenville Ministry retires—It is succeeded by the Portland Administration—"*The* Book" suppressed—A few copies fall into alien hands—These are bought at high prices by the Government—A Minute of the new Cabinet states that the King should at once receive the Princess—Another Minute advises that apartments in a royal palace should be assigned to her—The Princess is invited to Court—Kensington Palace allotted to her for a town residence.

THE rest of the story of "The Delicate Investigation" is best told in a series of letters.

The Princess, after waiting nine weeks for a reply to the detailed statement of her case, again addressed the King.

SIRE, MONTAGUE-HOUSE, *Dec. 8th*, 1806.

I trust your Majesty, who knows my constant

affection, loyalty, and duty, and the sure confidence with which I readily repose my honour, my character and my happiness, in your Majesty's hands, will not think me guilty of any disrespect or unduteous impatience, when I thus again address myself to your royal grace and justice.

It is, sire, nine weeks to-day since my counsel presented to the Lord High Chancellor my letter to your Majesty, containing my observations, in vindication of my honour and innocence, upon the report presented to your majesty by the commissioners, who had been appointed to examine into my conduct. The Lord Chancellor informed my counsel, that the letter should be conveyed to your Majesty on that very day; and further was pleased, in about a week or ten days afterwards, to communicate to my solicitor, that your Majesty had read my letter, and that it had been transmitted to his lordship, with directions that it should be copied for the commissioners, and that, when such copy had been taken, the original should be returned to your Majesty.

Your Majesty's own gracious and royal mind will easily conceive what must have been my state of anxiety and suspense, whilst I have been fondly indulging in the hope, that every day, as it passed, would bring me the happy tidings, that your Majesty was satisfied of my innocence, and convinced of the unfounded malice of my enemies, in every part of their charge. Nine long weeks of daily expectation and suspense have now elapsed, and they have brought me nothing but disappointment. I have remained in total ignorance of what has been done, what is doing, or what is intended upon this subject. Your Majesty's goodness will, therefore, pardon me, if, in the step which I now take, I act upon a mistaken conjecture with respect to the fact. But from the Lord Chancellor's communication to my solicitor,

and from the time which has elapsed, I am led to conclude, that your Majesty had directed the copy of my letter to be laid before the commissioners, requiring their advice upon the subject; and, possibly, their official occupations, and their other duties to the state, may not have as yet allowed them the opportunity of attending to it. But your Majesty will permit me to observe, that however excusable this delay may be on their parts, yet it operates most injuriously upon me; my feelings are severely tortured by the suspense, while my character is sinking in the opinion of the public.

It is known, that a report, though acquitting me of crime, yet imputing matters highly disreputable to my honour, has been made to your Majesty; that that report has been communicated to me; that I have endeavoured to answer it; and that I still remain, at the end of nine weeks from the delivery of my answer, unacquainted with the judgment which is formed upon it. May I be permitted to observe upon the extreme prejudice which this delay, however to be accounted for by the numerous important occupations of the commissioners, produces to my honour? The world, in total ignorance of the real state of the facts, begin to infer my guilt from it. I feel myself already sinking in the estimation of your Majesty's subjects, as well as of what remains to me of my own family, into (a state intolerable to a mind conscious of its purity and innocence) a state in which my honour appears at least equivocal, and my virtue is suspected. From this state I humbly entreat your Majesty to perceive, that I can have no hope of being restored, until either your Majesty's favourable opinion shall be graciously notified to the world, by receiving me again into the royal presence, or until the full disclosure of the facts shall expose the malice of my accusers,

and do away every possible ground for unfavourable inference and conjecture.

The various calamities with which it has pleased God of late to afflict me, I have endeavoured to bear, and trust I have borne, with humble resignation to the Divine will. But the effect of this infamous charge, and the delay which has suspended its final termination, by depriving me of the consolation which I should have received from your Majesty's presence and kindness, have given a heavy addition to them all; and surely, my bitterest enemies could hardly wish that they should be increased. But on this topic, as possibly not much affecting the justice, though it does the hardship of my case, I forbear to dwell.

Your Majesty will be graciously pleased to recollect, that an occasion of assembling the royal family and your subjects, in dutiful and happy commemoration of her Majesty's birthday, is now near at hand. If the increased occupations which the approach of parliament may occasion, or any other cause should prevent the commissioners from enabling your Majesty to communicate your pleasure to me before that time, the world will infallibly conclude (in their present state of ignorance), that my answer must have proved unsatisfactory, and that the infamous charges have been thought but too true.

These considerations, Sire, will, I trust, in your Majesty's gracious opinion, rescue this address from all imputation of impatience. For, your Majesty's sense of honourable feeling will naturally suggest, how utterly impossible it is that I, conscious of my own innocence, and believing that the malice of my enemies has been completely detected, can, without abandoning all regard to my interests, my happiness, and my honour, possibly be contented to perceive the approach of such utter ruin to my character, and

yet wait, with patience and in silence, till it overwhelms me. I therefore take this liberty of throwing myself again at your Majesty's feet, and entreating and imploring of your Majesty's goodness and justice, in pity for my miseries, which this delay so severely aggravates, and in justice to my innocence and character, to urge the commissioners to an early communication of their advice.

To save your Majesty and the commissioners all unnecessary trouble, as well as to obviate all probability of further delay, I have directed a duplicate of this letter to be prepared, and have sent one copy of it through the Lord Chancellor, and another through Colonel Taylor, to your Majesty.

I am, Sire, with every sentiment of gratitude and loyalty, your Majesty's most affectionate and dutiful daughter-in-law, servant, and subject, C. P.

The Princess's Statement of October 2 had, however, at once been submitted by the King to the Ministry, which was reluctant to give any opinion upon the matter. "Mr. Grenville and Lord Sidmouth thought that, after so broad an acquittal, we should exceed our powers in speaking of levities at all," Lord Holland has recorded; "and they wished the Cabinet to decline to give an opinion at all." The King insisted, however, and, after considerable delay, on January 25 it presented to his Majesty a carefully worded Minute. Upon this, the King based the following reply to the Princess, to whom it was sent through the medium of the Lord Chancellor:

The King to the Princess of Wales

January 28, 1807.

The King, having referred to his confidential servants

the proceedings and papers relative to the written declarations, which had been before his Majesty, respecting the conduct of the Princess of Wales, has been apprized by them, that after the fullest consideration of the examinations taken on the subject, and of the observations and affidavits brought forward by the Princess of Wales's legal advisers, they agree in the opinions submitted to his Majesty in the original report of the four lords, by whom his Majesty directed that the matter should in the first instance be inquired into; and that, in the present stage of the business, upon a mature and deliberate view of this most important subject in all its parts and bearings, it is their opinion, that the facts of this case do not warrant their advising that any further step should be taken in the business by his Majesty's government, or any other proceedings instituted upon it, except such only as his Majesty's law servants may, on reference to them, think fit to recommend, for the prosecution of Lady Douglas, on those parts of her depositions which may appear to them to be justly liable thereto.

In this situation, his Majesty is advised, that it is no longer necessary for him to decline receiving the princess into his royal presence.

The King sees, with great satisfaction, the agreement of his confidential servants, in the decided opinion expressed by the four lords, upon the falsehood of the accusations of pregnancy and delivery brought forward against the Princess by Lady Douglas.

On the other matters produced in the course of the inquiry, the King is advised that none of the facts or allegations stated in preliminary examinations, carried on in the absence of the parties interested, can be considered as legally or conclusively established. But in those examinations, and even in the answer drawn in the name of the princess by her legal advisers, there have appeared circumstances of conduct on

the part of the princess, which his Majesty never could regard but with serious concern.* The elevated rank which the princess holds in this country, and the relation in which she stands to his Majesty and the royal family, must always deeply involve both the interests of the state, and the personal feelings of his Majesty, in the propriety and correctness of her conduct. And his Majesty cannot therefore forbear to express in the conclusion of the business, his desire and expectation, that such a conduct may in future be observed by the princess, as may fully justify those marks of paternal regard and affection, which the King always wishes to shew to every part of his royal family.

His Majesty has directed that this message should be transmitted to the Princess of Wales, by his Lord Chancellor, and that copies of the proceedings, which had taken place on the subject, should also be communicated to his dearly beloved son the Prince of Wales.

The Princess of Wales to the King

SIRE, MONTAGUE-HOUSE, *Jan. 29th*, 1807.

I hasten to acknowledge the receipt of the paper, which, by your Majesty's direction, was yesterday transmitted to me by the Lord Chancellor, and to express the unfeigned happiness which I have derived from one part of it. I mean that which informs me, that your Majesty's confidential servants have, at length, thought proper to communicate to your Majesty their advice, " that it is no longer necessary for your Majesty to decline receiving me into

* " In the message, as originally framed by the Ministry, it was ' His Majesty sees with concern and disapprobation,' but the King, with his own hand, struck out the word ' disapprobation ' and substituted ' serious concern.' "—Romilly: Memoirs, ii. 40.

your royal presence." And I, therefore, humbly hope, that your Majesty will be graciously pleased to receive with favour the communication of my intention to avail myself, with your Majesty's permission, of that advice, for the purpose of waiting upon your Majesty on Monday next, if that day should not be inconvenient; when I hope again to have the happiness of throwing myself, in filial duty and affection, at your Majesty's feet.

Your Majesty will easily conceive, that I reluctantly name so distant a day as Monday, but I do not feel myself sufficiently recovered from the measles, to venture upon so long a drive at an earlier day. Feeling, however, very anxious to receive again, as soon as possible, that blessing, of which I have been so long deprived, if that day should happen to be, in any degree, inconvenient, I humbly entreat and implore your Majesty's most gracious and paternal goodness, to name some other day, as early as possible, for that purpose.

I am, &c.

C. P.

The King to the Princess of Wales

WINDSOR CASTLE, *January 29th*, 1807.

The King has this moment received the Princess of Wales's letter, in which she intimates her intention of coming to Windsor on Monday next; and his Majesty, wishing not to put the princess to the inconvenience of coming to this place so immediately after her illness, hastens to acquaint her, that he shall prefer to receive her in London, upon a day subsequent to the ensuing week, which will also better suit his Majesty, and of which he will not fail to apprize the Princess.

GEORGE R.

It seemed that at last the matter was definitely settled, and even Romilly in his Diary noted that

" the affair of the Princess of Wales is at last terminated but not very satisfactorily to any party." At the eleventh hour, however, there was an unexpected hitch.

The King to the Princess of Wales

WINDSOR CASTLE, *February 10th*, 1807.

As the Princess of Wales may have been led to expect from the King's letter to her, that he would fix an early day for seeing her, his Majesty thinks it right to acquaint her, that the Prince of Wales, upon receiving the several documents, which the King directed his cabinet to transmit to him, made a formal communication to him, of his intention to put them into the hands of his lawyers; accompanied by a request, that his Majesty would suspend any further steps in the business, until the Prince of Wales should be enabled to submit to him the statement which he proposed to make. The King, therefore, considers it incumbent upon him to defer naming a day to the Princess of Wales, until the further result of the Prince's intention shall have been made known to him.

GEORGE R.

The Princess of Wales to the King

SIRE, MONTAGUE HOUSE, *February 12th*, 1807.

I received yesterday, and with inexpressible pain, your Majesty's last communication. The duty of stating, in a representation to your Majesty, the various grounds upon which I feel the hardship of my case, and upon which I confidently hope that, upon a review of it, your Majesty will be disposed to recall your last determination, is a duty I owe to myself: and I cannot forbear, at the moment when I acknowledge your Majesty's letter, to announce to your Majesty, that I propose to execute that duty without delay.

After having suffered the punishment of banishment from your Majesty's presence for seven months, pending an inquiry, which your Majesty had directed into my conduct, affecting both my life and my honour;—after that inquiry had, at length, terminated in the advice of your Majesty's confidential and sworn servants, that there was no longer any reason for your Majesty's declining to receive me;—if after your Majesty's gracious communication, which led me to rest assured that your Majesty would appoint an early day to receive me;—if after all this, by a renewed application on the part of the Prince of Wales, upon whose communication the first inquiry had been directed, I now find that that punishment, which has been inflicted, pending a seven months' inquiry before the determination, should, contrary to the opinion of your Majesty's servants, be continued after that determination, to await the result of some new proceeding, to be suggested by the lawyers of the Prince of Wales; it is impossible that I can fail to assert to your Majesty, with the effect due to truth, that I am, in the consciousness of my innocence, and with a strong sense of my unmerited sufferings,

Your Majesty's most dutiful, and most affectionate, but much injured subject and daughter-in-law,

C. P.

The indignant tone of the above letter was fully justified. It was apparent that the Prince of Wales, unable to prove his consort guilty, was determined to fight to the last to prevent such public admission of her innocence as her appearance at Court would tacitly convey. In an able letter (composed probably by Perceval), the Princess shows that her patience is nearly exhausted, and while before she had complained—all too mildly, her advocates were inclined

to think—of the steps that had been taken against her, now she speaks plainly of the persecution of which she has been the victim.

The Princess of Wales to the King

February 16, 1807.

. . . Your Majesty will necessarily conceive that I have always looked upon my banishment from your royal presence as, in fact, a punishment, and a severe one too. I thought it sufficiently hard that I should have been suffering that punishment, during the time that this inquiry has been pending, while I was yet only under accusation, and upon the principles of the just laws of your Majesty's kingdom, entitled to be presumed to be innocent, till I was proved to be guilty. But I find this does not appear to be enough, in the opinion of the Prince of Wales. For now, when after this long enquiry, into matters which required immediate investigation, I have been acquitted of every thing which could call for my banishment from your royal presence ;—after your Majesty's confidential servants have thus expressly advised your Majesty that they see no reason why you should any longer decline to receive me into your presence—after your Majesty has graciously notified to me, your determination to receive me at an early day, his royal highness interposes the demand of a new delay ; desires your Majesty not to take any step ; desires you not to act upon the advice which your own confidential servants have given you, that you need no longer decline seeing me ;—not to execute your intention and assurance, that you would receive me at an early day ;—because he has laid the documents before his lawyers, and intends to prepare a further statement. And the judgment of your Majesty's confidential servants, is, as it were, appealed

from by the Prince of Wales (whom, from this time at least, I must be permitted to consider as assuming the character of my accuser);—the justice due to me is to be suspended, while the judgment of your Majesty's sworn servants is to be submitted to the revision of my accuser's counsel; and I, though acquitted, in the opinion of your Majesty's confidential servants, of all that should induce your Majesty to decline seeing me, am to have that punishment, which had been inflicted upon me during the inquiry, continued after that acquittal, till a fresh statement is prepared, to be again submitted, for aught I know, to another inquiry, of as extended a continuance as that which has just terminated.

Can it be said that the proceedings of the four noble lords, or of your Majesty's confidential servants, have been so lenient and considerate towards me and my feelings, as to induce a suspicion that I have been too favourably dealt with by them? and that the advice which has been given to your Majesty, that your Majesty need no longer decline to receive me, was hastily and partially delivered? I am confident that your Majesty must see the very reverse of this to be the case—that I have every reason to complain of the inexplicable delay which so long withheld that advice. And the whole character of the observations with which they accompanied it, marks the reluctance with which they yielded to the necessity of giving it.

For your Majesty's confidential servants advise your Majesty, "that it is no longer necessary for you to decline receiving me into your royal presence." If this is their opinion and their advice now, why was it not their opinion and their advice four months ago, from the date of my answer? Nay, why was it not their opinion and advice from the date even of the original report itself? For not only had they been in possession of my answer for above *sixteen weeks*,

which at least furnished them with all the materials on which this advice at length was given, but further, your Majesty's confidential servants are forward to state, that after having read my observations, and the affidavits which they annexed to them, they agree in *the opinions* (not in any single opinion upon any particular branch of the case, but in *the opinions generally*) which were submitted to your Majesty in the original report of the four lords. If therefore (notwithstanding their concurrence in *all* the opinions contained in the report) they have nevertheless given to your Majesty their advice, " that it is no longer necessary for you to decline receiving me "—what could have prevented their offering that advice, even from the 14th of July, the date of the original report itself ? Or what could have warranted the withholding it, even for a single moment ? Instead, therefore, of any trace being observable of hasty, precipitate, and partial determination in my favour, it is impossible to interpret their conduct and their reasons together in any other sense, than as amounting to an admission of your Majesty's confidential servants themselves, that I have, in consequence of their withholding that advice, been unnecessarily and cruelly banished from your royal presence, from the 14th of July, to the 28th of January, including a space of about six months ; and the effect of the interposition of the prince, is to prolong my sufferings and my disgrace, under the same banishment, to a period perfectly indefinite.

The principle which will admit the effect of such interposition now, may be acted upon again ; and the Prince may require a further promulgation, upon fresh statements, and fresh charges, kept back possibly for the purpose of being, from time to time, conveniently interposed to prevent for ever the arrival of that hour, which, displaying to the world the acknowledgment of my unmerited sufferings and

disgrace, may, at the same time, expose the true, malicious, and unjust quality of the proceedings which have been so long carried on against me.

This unseasonable, unjust, and cruel interposition of his royal highness, as I must ever deem it, has prevailed upon your Majesty to recall, to my prejudice, your gracious purpose of receiving me in pursuance of the advice of your servants. Do I then flatter myself too much, when I feel assured, that my *just* entreaty, founded upon the reasons which I urge, and directed to counteract only the effect of that *unjust* interposition, will induce your Majesty to return to your original determination ?

Restored, however, as I should feel myself, to a state of comparative security, as well as credit, by being at length permitted, upon your Majesty's gracious reconsideration of your last determination, to have access to your Majesty; yet under all the circumstances under which I should now receive that mark and confirmation of your Majesty's opinion of my innocence, my character would not, I fear, stand cleared in the public opinion, by the mere fact of your Majesty's reception of me. This revocation of your Majesty's gracious purpose has flung an additional cloud about the whole proceeding, and the inferences drawn in the public mind from this circumstance, so mysterious, and so perfectly inexplicable, upon any grounds which are open to their knowledge, has made, and will leave so deep an impression to my prejudice, as scarce any thing short of a public exposure of all that has passed, can possibly efface.

Clearly the Princess had determined that she would no longer be a passive victim. If she was to be treated as guilty, or at least as if her innocence was not to be established, if the public was to be allowed, nay,

more, induced, to suppose that all the mystery that surrounded this affair was owing to the fact that her character was still suspect, why, then, to the public she would make her appeal, and let it judge between her and the Prince of Wales.

The publication of all these proceedings to the world [the letter continues], then seems to me, under the present circumstances (whatever reluctance I feel against such a measure, and however I regret the hard necessity which drives me to it) to be almost the only remaining resource, for the vindication of my honour and character. The falsehood of the accusation is, by no means, all that will, by such publication, appear to the credit and clearance of my character; but the course in which the whole proceedings have been carried on, or rather delayed, by those to whom your Majesty referred the consideration of them, will shew, that whatever measure of justice I may have ultimately received at their hands, it is not to be suspected as arising from any merciful and indulgent consideration of me, of my feelings, or of my case.

It will be seen how my feelings had been harassed, and my character and honour exposed, by the delays which have taken place in these proceedings; it will be seen, that the existence of the charge against me had avowedly been known to the public, from the 7th of June in the last year.—I say known to the public, because it was on that day that the commissioners, acting, as I am to suppose (for so they state in their report), under the anxious wish that their trust should be executed with as little publicity as possible, authorised that unnecessary insult and outrage upon me, as I must always consider it, which, however intended, gave the utmost publicity and exposure to the existence of

these charges—I mean the sending two attornies, armed with their lordships' warrant, to my house, to bring before them at once one half of my household for examination. The idea of privacy, after an act so much calculated, from the extraordinary nature of it, to excite the greatest attention and surprise, your Majesty must feel to have been impossible and absurd; for an attempt at secrecy, mystery, and concealment, on my part, could, under such circumstance, only have been construed into the fearfulness of guilt.

It will appear also, that from that time, I heard nothing authentically, upon the subject till the 11th of August, when I was furnished, by your Majesty's commands, with the report. The several papers necessary to my understanding the whole of these charges, in the authentic state in which your Majesty thought it proper graciously to direct that I should have them, were not delivered to me till the beginning of September. My answer to these various charges, though the whole subject of them was new to those whose advice I had recourse to, long as that answer was necessarily obliged to be, was delivered to the Lord Chancellor, to be forwarded to your Majesty by the 6th of October: and, from the 6th of October to the 28th of January, I was kept in total ignorance of the effect of that answer. Not only will all this delay be apparent, but it will be generally shewn to the world how your Majesty's servants had, in this important business, treated your daughter-in-law, the Princess of Wales; and what measure of justice she, a female, and a stranger in your land, has experienced at their hands.

Undoubtedly against such a proceeding I have ever felt, and still feel, an almost invincible repugnance. Every sentiment of delicacy, with which a female mind must shrink from the act of bringing before the

public such charges, however conscious of their scandal and falsity, and however clearly that scandal and falsity may be manifested by the answer to those charges; —the respect still due from me, to persons employed in authority under your Majesty, however little respect I may have received from them;—my duty to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales;—my regard for all the members of your august family;—my esteem, my duty, my gratitude to your Majesty,—my affectionate gratitude for all the paternal kindness which I have ever experienced from you;—my anxiety, not only to avoid the risk of giving any offence or displeasure to your Majesty, but also to fly from every occasion of creating the slightest sentiment of uneasiness in the mind of your Majesty, whose happiness it would be the pride and pleasure of my life to consult, and to promote; and these various sentiments have compelled me to submit, as long as human forbearance could endure, to all the unfavourable inferences which were, through this delay, daily increasing in the public mind. What the strength and efficacy of these motives have been, your Majesty will do me the justice to feel, when you are pleased, graciously, to consider how long I have been contented to suffer those suspicions against my innocence, which the bringing before the public of my accusation and my defence to it, would so indisputably and immediately have dispelled.

The measure, however, of making these proceedings public, whatever mode I can adopt (considering especially the absolute impossibility of suffering any partial production of them, and the necessity that, if for any purpose any part of them should be produced, the whole must be brought before the public) remains surrounded with all the objections which I have enumerated; and nothing could ever have prevailed upon me, or can now even prevail upon me

to have recourse to it, but an imperious sense of indispensable duty to my future safety, to my present character and honour, and to the feelings, the character, and the interests of my child, I had flattered myself, when once this long proceeding should have terminated, in my reception into your Majesty's presence, that circumstances alone would have so strongly implied my innocence of all that had been brought against me, as to have been perfectly sufficient for my honour and my security; but accompanied, as it now must be, with the knowledge of the fact, that your Majesty has been brought to hesitate upon its propriety, and accompanied also with the very unjustifiable observations, as they appear to me, on which I shall presently proceed to remark; and which were made by your Majesty's servants, at the time when they gave you their advice to receive me; I feel myself in a situation, in which I deeply regret that I cannot rest, in silence, without an immediate reception into your Majesty's presence; nor, indeed, with that reception, unless it be attended by other circumstances, which may mark my satisfactory acquittal of the charges which have been brought against me.

This was, indeed, carrying the war into the enemies' camp, and the consternation that it caused was extreme. The Princess had suffered in silence so long that her outburst now carried great weight. But the threat of publication was not all. Her Royal Highness demanded peremptorily that she should be received at Court without delay, and that the apartments at Carlton House reserved for her until the beginning of the proceedings should be restored to her, or another suite assigned to her in one of the royal palaces in London. If these conditions are

complied with the Princess states that "no further step may, even now, appear to be necessary to my peace of mind, my security, and my honour." Further dalliance, however, she will not have.

Your Majesty will permit me to say, that if the next week, which will make more than a month from the time of your Majesty's informing me that you would receive me, should pass without my being received into your presence, and without having the assurance that these other requests of mine shall be complied with; I shall be under the painful necessity of considering them as refused. In which case I shall feel myself compelled, however reluctantly, to give the whole of these proceedings to the world,—unless your Majesty can suggest other adequate means of securing my honour and my life from the effects of the continuance or renewal of these proceedings, for the future as well as the present; for I entreat your Majesty to believe, that it is only in the absence of all other adequate means, that I can have resort to that measure. That I consider it with deep regret; that I regard it with serious apprehension, by no means so much on account of the effect it may have upon myself, as on account of the pain which it may give to your Majesty, your august family, and your loyal subjects.

As far as myself am concerned, I am aware of the observations to which this publication will expose me. But I am placed in a situation in which I have the choice only of two most unpleasant alternatives; and I am perfectly confident that the imputations and the loss of character which must, under these circumstances, follow from my silence, are most injurious and unavoidable; that my silence, under such circumstances, must lead inevitably to my utter

infamy and ruin. The publication, on the other hand, will expose to the world nothing which is spoken to by any witness (whose infamy and discredit is not unanswerably exposed and established) which can, in the slightest degree, affect my character for honour, virtue, and delicacy.

The Princess stated that she was aware the publication might show her as having manifested a degree of condescension and familiarity which might by many be thought not sufficiently guarded, dignified, and reserved; but even this would not appear so marked in the course of the complete narrative as when given, as it has been given by the Commissioners, isolated from the context. The letter deals again with her separation from the Prince and the circumstances and false witnesses of "The Delicate Investigation," with which matters it is not necessary here to deal again; but there is one passage which must be given, and which, had this letter, much less her whole story, been given to the public, would have found a ready echo in the hearts of the British people.

Whatever opinion, however, may be formed upon any part of my conduct, it must in justice be formed, with reference to the situation in which I was placed; if I am judged of as Princess of Wales, with reference to the high rank of that station, I must be judged as Princess of Wales, banished from the Prince, unprotected by the support of the countenance which belong to that station; and if I am judged of in my private character, as a married woman, I must be judged of as a wife banished from her husband, and living in a widowed seclusion from him, and retirement from the world.

Even this letter of February 16 did not bring a reply from the King, and the Princess determined to wait no longer. The statement of her case was prepared, and while it was in the press she addressed herself once more to his Majesty.

The Princess of Wales to the King

SIRE, MONTAGUE HOUSE, *March* 5, 1807.

When I last troubled your Majesty upon my unfortunate business, I had raised my mind to hope, that I should have the happiness of hearing from your Majesty, and receiving your gracious commands, to pay my duty in your royal presence, before the expiration of the last week. And when that hope was disappointed (eagerly clinging to any idea which offered me a prospect of being saved from the necessity of having recourse, for the vindication of my character, to the publication of the proceedings upon the inquiry into my conduct), I thought it just possible that the reason of my not having received your Majesty's commands to that effect, might have been occasioned by the circumstance of your Majesty's staying at Windsor through the whole of the week. I therefore determined to wait a few days longer before I took a step which, when once taken, could not be recalled. Having, however, now assured myself that your Majesty was in town yesterday—as I have received no command to wait upon your Majesty, and no intimation of your pleasure—I am reduced to the necessity of abandoning all hope that your Majesty will comply with my humble, my earnest, and anxious requests.

Your Majesty, therefore, will not be surprised to find that the publication of the proceedings alluded to will not be withheld beyond Monday next.

As to any consequences which may arise from such publication, unpleasant or hurtful to my own feelings and interests, I may perhaps be properly responsible; and, in any event, have no one to complain of but myself and those with whose advice I have acted; and whatever those consequences may be, I am fully and unalterably convinced, that they must be incalculably less than those which I should be exposed to from my silence; but as to any other consequences, unpleasant or hurtful to the feelings and interests of others, or of the public, my conscience will certainly acquit me of them;—I am confident that I have not acted impatiently or precipitately. To avoid coming to this painful extremity, I have taken every step in my power, except that which would be abandoning my character to utter infamy, and my station and life to no uncertain danger, and possibly, to no very distant destruction.

With every prayer for the lengthened continuance of your Majesty's health and happiness; for every possible blessing which a gracious God can bestow upon the beloved monarch of a loyal people, and for the continued prosperity of your dominions, under your Majesty's propitious reign, I remain,

Your Majesty's most dutiful, loyal,
And affectionate, but most unhappy,
And most injured daughter-in-law,
Subject, and servant,
C. P.

The statement of the Princess's case, drawn up by, or under the supervision of, Perceval, was printed by one Edwards, of Crane Court, Fleet Street, under conditions of the greatest secrecy. The proof-sheets were sent to a nominal editor, who passed them on to Perceval, and, when corrected, returned them to

the printer. Five thousand copies were printed, and the whole issue was delivered and stored at some place unknown. March 9 was the date fixed for publication, but just before then it became known that the Grenville Ministry were about to resign, and would, of course, be succeeded by a Tory Administration, which could not but be largely composed of the Princess's friends and advisers. This, of course, changed the whole situation, for there could be no doubt that now her Royal Highness would triumph. She was, therefore, advised to take no step that could in any way prejudice her cause, and to leave the matter in the hands of the Portland Ministry, which would see her righted. "*The* Book," as her pamphlet was called, was suppressed. For this action Perceval has been much blamed, but the censure was undeserved. There could be no object in publishing the details of the unsavoury business, which would now be settled in a much more agreeable manner. The intention has been to discredit the Grenville Administration, but to publish "*The* Book" now would be like firing rounds of ammunition at an enemy that had moved out of range of the guns. All the copies that had been delivered to Perceval or his nominee were burnt, and it was thought that there was an end of the matter. There had, however, been a leakage, and some copies—estimated variously at from two to six—escaped the holocaust. One of these came into the hands of William Cobbett, who for safety sent it to New York. Another came into possession of the editor of a Sunday newspaper, who announced that he should publish it, but was prevented from doing so by an injunction of the Court

of Chancery, granted on March 11, 1808, upon a private hearing by Lord Eldon. The editor, however, obtained, it is said, £1,500 for his copy; and other copies were brought in by the Government, so rumour had it, at sums between £1,000 and £5,000.

The new Ministry at once began to take into consideration the Princess's case, and on April 22, 1807, a Minute of Council (signed by the Duke of Portland, Lords Eldon, Camden, Westmorland, Chatham, Bathurst, Castlereagh, Hawkesbury, and Mr. Secretary Canning *) was submitted to his Majesty, in which it was stated that the matter had been considered, that the Cabinet agreed with their predecessors that the Prince of Wales had only done his duty in notifying the King of the statements made to him, and that the main charges were "satisfactorily contradicted, or rest upon evidence of such a nature, and which was given under such circumstances as render it . . . undeserving of credit."

Your Majesty's confidential servants, therefore, concurring in that part of the opinion of your late servants, as stated in their minute of the 25th of January, that there is no longer any necessity for your Majesty being advised to decline receiving the princess into your royal presence, humbly submit to your Majesty, that it is essentially necessary, in justice to her royal highness, and for the honour and interests of your Majesty's illustrious family, that her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales should be admitted, with as little delay as possible, into your Majesty's

* Perceval, now Chancellor of the Exchequer, had been so closely identified with the matter as the Princess's adviser that he thought it in better taste to abstain from signing the Minute.

royal presence, and that she should be received in a manner due to her rank and station, in your Majesty's court and family.

On the same day was signed also another Minute :

Your Majesty's confidential servants think it necessary to notice, in a separate minute, the request of her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, that for her more convenient attendance at your Majesty's court, some apartment should be allotted to her in one of the royal palaces : although it appears to your Majesty's confidential servants, that some arrangement in this respect may be supposed naturally to arise out of the present state of this transaction yet they humbly conceive that this is a subject so purely of a private and domestic nature, that your Majesty would not expect from them any particular advice respecting it.

In consequence of these representations of the Cabinet, the Princess was invited to appear at Court, and Kensington Palace was assigned to her for her residence in London.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PRIVATE LIFE OF THE PRINCESS OF WALES

1807—1814

The Queen and her daughters still hold aloof from the Princess—The King's continued regard for her—Her great popularity with the general public—Society at Kensington Palace—Tributes to the Princess from Sir William Gell, "Monk" Lewis, etc.—Agreeable assemblies at Kensington—The Princess's *suite*: Sir William Gell, Lady Charlotte Lindsay, Lady Anne Hamilton, Lady Charlotte Campbell—The wits gather round her—Her magnanimity—Her charm and humour—An admirable hostess—Her conquest of Mary Berry—William Austin—Her pride—Her visitors—The Duchess of Brunswick—Her smaller parties—Her innocent escapades—A selection from her letters to Mary Berry, Lady Charlotte Campbell, and Lady Charlotte Lindsay.

THE Princess of Wales went to Court on May 7, 1807; but, while the King gave her a hearty welcome, the Queen and the Princesses received her coldly. This, however, did not surprise her Royal Highness, who had not expected cordiality from her mother-in-law and sisters-in-law, a group of women as unpleasant and as unsympathetic as could be met with in any part of the country. "If I had always lived with my cousins, the royal family, and if they were kind to me, I should like them and care for them," the Princess said to Lady Charlotte Campbell in 1810; "but I cannot say, treating me as they do, that I feel that affection for them I should otherwise

feel, except for my dear old uncle, and he, poor dear, is lost to me now. So I confess, all I am afraid of is, lest the Princess Amelia should die; because I could not then get out to amuse myself." In this last statement, so unlike her Royal Highness's usual kindliness, may be detected some trace of that bitterness which it was always her proud desire to conceal.

The Princess had gone to Court only to give the world convincing proof that her innocence of the charges brought against her by the Douglases had been clearly demonstrated. If further evidence was wanting that her character was cleared, it was to be found in the renewal of the King's frequent visits to her at Blackheath and at Kensington Palace. The fact that the Queen and her daughter never went to see her at either place did not in any way detract from her popularity with the general public. At this time, and indeed for the rest of her life, she was probably the most popular royal personage in the land. Every one knew of the persecution she had suffered, not only through "The Delicate Investigation" at her consort's hands, but in the early days of her marriage. Even Romilly could not deny that the Heir Apparent's conduct towards his bride "may have been extremely unjustifiable." The Princess, it may be put to her credit, showed a tact not usually associated with her character, in not exploiting this good feeling at the expense of those whom it is not straining language to call her enemies. Though she knew she would be cheered to the echo wherever she appeared in public, she was seldom seen, even at the opera or the theatre.

The general impression, based upon the gossip of

the day in circles prejudiced against her, is that the Princess of Wales was surrounded by the riff-raff of society. It is as well now to pause and see who were her companions and visitors at Blackheath and Kensington Palace. Fortunately there is abundant information, and all of it of a satisfactory nature, both about herself and her circle. When Lady Charlotte Campbell * was invited in 1810 to accept the position of a Lady-in-waiting to her Royal Highness, she, being aware of the reports that were being circulated, very naturally made inquiries, and the replies of Sir William Gell, "Monk" Lewis, and an anonymous woman-friend are very valuable evidence, since, of course, their letters, being confidential, were written in all frankness.

Sir William Gell to Lady Charlotte Campbell

[1810.]

. . . You ask me for news of the Princess. Her Royal Highness appears gay and well in health. I have dined frequently lately at Kensington, and the society has been most agreeable and "select," as the papers say. But when I tell you these parties were made up of the [Lady Charlotte] Lindsay,† and

* Lady Charlotte Campbell (1775–1861) was a daughter of the fifth Duke of Argyll, by his wife, the beautiful Elizabeth Gunning. In 1796 she married her kinsman, Colonel John Campbell, and bore him nine children. Left a widow in 1809, she married, nine years later, the Rev. E. J. Bury.

† Lady Charlotte North (1770–1849), the youngest daughter of Frederick, second Earl of Guilford (better known as Lord North), married in 1800 Lieutenant-Colonel the Hon. John Lindsay, son of James, fifth Earl of Balcarres. Her eldest sister, Catherine Anne, married Lord Glenbervie.

the Berry *par excellence* of all the Berries in the world; Lady Oxford, who is lovely indeed to look upon; my Lord Byron; sometimes Sidney Smith, from whom issues perpetual and dazzling sparks of the most brilliant wit; the grave Lord Henry [Fitzgerald]; and, though last not least, your humble servant; you can believe these parties must be super-excellent, reflecting on the superior qualities of each individual who has composed them. It is wrong in me to have omitted our royal hostess herself; for to "*us*" much of the gaiety and spirit of these entertainments is due. "*We*" are most irresistibly good-natured and droll, in despite of ourselves.

Oh the English! Oh the English! it is perfect. "Fie, fie, Mr, Gell, *dat* is a great shame, 'pon honour. You see *vat* it is to make one man one's friend who laugh at me when I do turn my back."

"I do hate Lord Henry, my dear ——; to *tell you God's truth*, I cannot bear dat man." (Courtier)—"I agree with your Royal Highness." (*Aside.*)—"The Lord forgive you for *leeing*, for leeing," etc.

To return to the Kensington parties—joking apart, they are the pleasantest arranged meetings in London.

Mr. G. Lewis to Lady Charlotte Campbell

[1810.]

She is extremely good-humoured and obliging, and seems very much attached to the persons in whose favour she conceives a prepossession. She is by no means *exigeante*; at the same time, no little attention is lost upon her. She seems grateful for the slightest indication of good-will (probably, poor soul! the ill-treatment which she has at times received since her arrival in this country have made such doubly acceptable to her), and she is generous, indeed I may say profuse, in her manner of returning them.

Mrs. —— to Lady Charlotte Campbell

[1810.]

I believe the Princess to be exceedingly amiable—a true and zealous friend to all those whom she once takes *en amitié*; and is moreover an excessively agreeable companion, full of natural talent, and combines in a surprising manner the dignity of her position with an unaffected and natural ease very rarely seen in a Princess. It is, indeed, only fair to add, that she makes it a point to draw about her all the clever and agreeable persons she can; and that, particularly in a *royalty*, is no small merit. There are no courtiers or parasites in the society at Kensington; it is chosen with great discrimination and impartiality from all that is most distinguished in rank and talent, and, above all, *agrément* is the greatest attraction a person can have for her Royal Highness. . . .

You ask me to tell you something of the individuals who form the Princess of Wales's household, and if they are persons of amiable and agreeable qualities. I can give you a most satisfactory reply to this inquiry. They are all known to me personally, some more and some less; but, through others of my friends who are intimate with several of them, I am able to say I feel sure you will find them all particularly honourable and superior persons. Of Lady Charlotte Lindsay's wit and proverbial good-humour and kindness of heart, you must be well acquainted; her sister also, though less brilliant, is fully as amiable. Miss Garth is a very estimable character, simple-minded, and very downright in all she says, and little suited to a Court, except from her high principles and admirable caution, which indeed render her a safe and desirable attendant upon royalty. Miss Hayman is shrewd and sensible; she has strong sense and good judgment; she plays well on the pianoforte, and

understands the science of music, and has very agreeable manners, though not polished ones. All these persons are totally different from the commonplace run of character, and the Princess's selection of such persons does her infinite credit, as they are of a very different quality from those who generally occupy places at a Court.

That the gatherings at the Princess's were at once enjoyable and decorous there is no doubt. "The pleasant evenings I have spent at Kensington, her Royal Highness's hospitality, and the delightful assemblage of persons she had the good taste to congregate around her, will ever form the most agreeable reminiscences in my life." Thus "Monk" Lewis, on the eve of his departure in 1815 for Jamaica. The members of her *suite* alone were enough to ensure success. Sir William Gell, one of her Chamberlains, a distinguished archæologist and a much-travelled man, was a humorist of no mean order. Lady Charlotte Lindsay, a Lady-in-waiting, was also noted for her wit, which, Sir Walter Scott wrote to Lady Anne Barnard, "flowed as if she was quite unconscious of it and always reminded me of the gifted princess, who could not comb her locks without producing pearls and rubies." Lady Charlotte Campbell and Lady Anne Hamilton * were the Princess's other Ladies. Lady Anne, apparently, was dull, but her loyalty was beyond question; while Lady Charlotte, who had literary ambitions that eventually resulted in a series of the dullest novels, was, though entirely

* Lady Anne Hamilton (1766–1846) was the eldest daughter of Archibald, ninth Duke of Hamilton.

From an original water-colour drawing in the collection of A. M. Broadley, Esq.

CAROLINE, PRINCESS OF WALES,

As she appeared at a Masquerade at Montague House, Blackheath, in 1812.

devoid of humour, so beautiful that she always attracted a numerous court. The true proof of the Princess's success as a hostess is, of course, to be found, not in any tribute from Gell or Lewis, but in the regularity with which many of the most brilliant spirits of the day visited her. Byron, Mary Berry, Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Sam Rogers, Sidney Smith, Luttrell, "in spite of bad dinners and worse wines," as he put it, and the eccentric, delightful John William Ward, were frequently to be found at Kensington. "Did I ever tell you that the Princess of Wales is become a great friend of mine?" Ward wrote to Mrs. Dugald Stewart ("Ivy") in 1810. "I say *friend*, for the post of danger is occupied by Lord Henry Fitzgerald. She is a lively, good-natured, amusing woman." After this the Princess's comment on Ward comes as a cold douche. "I will let you know what Mr. Ward is," she said one day to Lady Charlotte Campbell. "He is a man all of vanity—he would marry for money, or parliamentary interest, or to a very fashionable woman, who would make a fool of him; but though *il joue le sentiment* sometimes, I do not believe he has one grain of it in his composition." Walter Scott had in 1806 been invited to Blackheath, when he wrote enthusiastically of his hostess to George Ellis: "She is an enchanting princess, who dwells in an enchanted palace, and I cannot help thinking that her prince must labour under some malignant spell when he denies himself her society," he declared. "The very Prince of the Black Isles, whose bottom was marble, would have made an effort to transport himself to Montague House." Probably it was the recollection of this visit that inspired Scott to write

the spirited lines on the Duke of Brunswick's death, familiar to all readers of "Marmion," which conclude :

> On thee relenting Heaven bestows
> For honour'd life an honour'd close ;
> And when revolves, in time's sure change,
> The hour of Germany's revenge,
> When, breathing fury for her sake,
> Some new Arminius shall awake,
> Her champion, ere he strike, shall come
> To whet his sword on Brunswick's tomb.

The Princess, grateful for the tribute, sent him a vase as a memento, and never failed to invite him to Blackheath or Kensington when he came to London —an attention with which he was not always so pleased as once he had been.

Walter Scott to Joanna Baillie

Edinburgh, *March* 13, 1813.

I shall have to resist very flattering invitations this season ; for I have received hints, from more quarters than one, that my bow would be acceptable at Carlton House, in case I should be in London, which is very flattering, especially as there were some prejudices to be got over in that quarter. I should be in some danger of giving new offence, too ; for, although I utterly disapprove of the present rash and ill-advised course of the Princess, yet, as she always was most kind and civil to me, I certainly could not, as a gentleman, decline obeying any commands she might give me to wait upon her, especially in her present adversity. So, though I do not affect to say I should be sorry to take an opportunity of peeping at the splendours of royalty, prudence and economy will keep me quietly at home till another day.

After the battle of Jena, at which the Duke of Brunswick was mortally wounded, his principality fell into the hands of the French, who retained it until the Peace of 1814. The widowed Duchess stayed for a while on the Continent, but eventually decided to make England her home. On July 9, 1807, she arrived at Gravesend, where her daughter met her and brought her to Montague House, whither the Duke of York, the Duke of Portland, and many others came to pay her their compliments. The King, cherishing old grievances, did not offer a residence, as a brother might have done for a sister, and the Sovereign certainly should have done for a Princess of England; and therefore the Duchess rented for herself and her *suite* small houses at Blackheath and at Spring Gardens, from which last residence she removed presently to Hanover Square. The Prince of Wales, on his aunt's arrival, sent word that he would wait upon her if he could find her alone. To this she replied, very rightly, that her daughter came to her at all hours, so that she could never answer for being alone. It was not lightly that the Duchess made this dignified answer, for she loved gaiety and feared that it would keep away a certain section of society. The Prince did not come, but later on, unexpectedly, he sent her an invitation to Carlton House, which the Duchess accepted with alacrity, telling her daughter of it, and asking her if would be possible for her to be carried upstairs on her cushion, and so on. The Princess answered her questions and did not once attempt to dissuade her from going. Indeed, it was only when her brother, the Duke of Brunswick,

who, with his family, had also come to England, said to her, "This must not be. You must not suffer her to think of going," that she wrote a long letter to her mother, explaining that, if the Duchess went to Carlton House, it would be regarded as a tacit approval of the Prince of Wales's conduct to her daughter. To Lady Glenbervie, who took the letter to Spring Gardens, the Duchess said: "No, I see the business in quite another point of view from what you do. I love my daughter above all things, and would do anything in the world for her; but I must go to Carlton House." From this resolve it was apparently impossible to move her; but at the eleventh hour she wrote to the Princess, saying: "Far be it from me to do anything contrary to your interests; and, hearing that there is a doubt upon the subject, I shall not go to Carlton House." The Princess, who had not been the less angry because she had kept silent, now smiled, a little wearily it may be, "Was there ever such an idea entered a mother's head?" she asked. "It was so evidently a trap to inveigle her into a tacit condemnation of me." The Duchess was, clearly, worse than useless as a supporter, but the Princess understood. "True, my moder behave ill to me several times, and did eat humble pie to the Queen," she remarked in later years; "yet she only did so from cowardice; she was grown old, and was soon terrified; but she love me for all dat." In spite of her hatred of "dullification," the Princess always dined with the Duchess on every Monday and Friday.

What was it that kept these folk about the Princess? It cannot have been the hope of loaves and fishes,

for in the first place she had none to bestow, and in the second place most of those who came did not require them. It cannot have been the mere pleasure of basking in the favour of a royal personage, for many, had they not come to Kensington, would have been welcome at Carlton House. Not, be it understood, that her Royal Highness raised any objection to those who came to her going also to the Prince of Wales: he it was who imposed a veto. "I have always considered it a noble contrast in the Princess's character, the liberal manner in which she always forgives her acquaintances and friends for paying court to 'The Great Mahomet,' as she calls him," "Monk" Lewis declared; "and I have particularly admired the total absence of all prejudice which she displays by frequently being even partial to many of the Regent's cronies. Certainly she has not the justice done her that is due to her merits." Can it be that the more discerning discovered her merits? Can it be that she had some charm which attracted the wits and kept them in her train? Can it be that her humour delighted them; that her indomitable good temper pleased them? To many, who regard her as a coarse demi-rep, these questions will savour of audacity: let those who answer them in the negative find some other explanation. Certainly to her gifts as a hostess even Lady Charlotte Campbell bore testimony. "I never saw any person, not royal or royal, who understood so well to perform the honours at their own table as the Princess," she admitted, grudgingly we may be sure, for she never liked her royal mistress; "she does it admirably, and makes more of her guests than any one else ever did."

Perhaps the greatest tribute to the Princess's charm was her conquest of Mary Berry, who, on being presented in May 1909, much against her will, at Henry Hope's, described the royal lady as "such an over-dressed, bare-bosomed, painted eye-browed figure as one never saw," and quoted George Robinson, who said, "She was the only true friend the Prince of Wales had, as she went about justifying his conduct." Yet from this inauspicious beginning sprang a sincere friendship. Miss Berry yielded up a little of her prejudice when she spent an hour with her Royal Highness a couple of months after their first meeting, when the Princess paid an informal visit to Strawberry Hill, and, hearing that the Misses Berry were in the house, commanded their presence.

"The Princess," Mary Berry noted in her Diary on August 7, 1809, "talked a great deal more than she looked at anything, and seemed pleased to have more people to talk to; the pictures, etc., of the house, and observations on them, came merely to fill up gaps and give new matter for discourse. She was in her very best manner, and her conversation is certainly uncommonly lively, odd, and clever. What a pity she has not a grain of *common* sense! not an ounce of ballast to prevent high spirits, and a coarse mind without any degree of moral taste, from running away with her, and allowing her to act indecorously and ridiculously whenever an occasion offers! Were she always to conduct herself as she did here to-day she would merit the character of having not only a remarkably easy and gracious manner, but natural cleverness above any of her *peers* that I have seen, and a good many have at

different times fallen under my observation. . . . She had with her the little boy whom she brings up. Some poor body's son at Deptford, and whom she would do well to put to school, but does very ill to take about with her during his holidays. She is not of a disposition to want either the amusement or endearing tenderness of a child." In this last sentence Miss Berry shows that she did not understand at least one side of the Princess's character, for, as has been mentioned, her Royal Highness was devoted to children, and especially to William Austin—perhaps because he was the innocent cause of much of her suffering. She took him about with her, and was careful that he should enjoy himself. On one occasion, when she was unwell, she went notwithstanding to the theatre, so that "Willikins" should not be disappointed on his birthday. At another time, in the winter of 1806-7, she nursed him through an attack of measles—and caught the disease. Her visitors did not approve of the attention she paid the lad. "It was unpardonable in the Princess to lavish her love upon such a little urchin of a boy, a little beggar, really no better. To see him brought in every day after dinner, bawling and kicking down the wine, and hung up by his breeches over the table for people to laugh at; and so ugly!" Thus Lady Hester Stanhope in or about 1805, who described him as "a nasty boy," "spoilt and mischievous," "a little, nasty, vulgar brat." Really, the Princess seems to have been unfortunate in her choice of a *protégé*, for Grantley Berkeley, many years later, wrote him down "a poor, weak, selfish creature, less calculated to create an interest in the breast than any one else." William

Austin, some time after the Princess's death, was incarcerated in a madhouse near Milan, in which institution he died.

One of the Princess's letters to him, hitherto unpublished, is preserved in the British Museum (where, curiously enough, it is catalogued as addressed to the Duke of Clarence).

The Princess of Wales to William Austin

Wednesday, the 16th [——, 1817].

My dear William,

You will be sorry to hear that poor Miss Sander had been very unwell, but you will at the same time be glad to hear also that she is better, but not quite well enough to answer your letter herself.

I hope you will find the Biscuits good.

Little John acted in "Tom Thumb," and acted the part of Tom Thumb himself, at his Aunt's House: he performed so well, that Lady Charlotte thinks it will amuse you all to act some Plays at Christmas either at her house or at Blackheath.

I thank you for your kind Letter, and am happy to hear you are so well and comfortable—and believe me,

Your most sincere friend

C. P.

The ladies send all their love and myself the same.

Miss Berry now met the Princess frequently, at the Glenberries, at the Abercorns, again at Strawberry Hill, and elsewhere; and she began to go to Kensington Palace, and, very much to her surprise, found pleasure in these visits. "Went with my sister to Kensington," she wrote on May 30, 1811. "A numerous ball; the Princess mighty gracious. I

had a long and almost an affecting conversation with her, because for the first time she seems to feel her own situation, while she continues very good-natured to others." Miss Berry's mistake was in assuming that her Royal Highness was only beginning in 1811 to feel her situation, whereas it was only then, perhaps, that she let Miss Berry see something of her feelings. The Princess was a very proud woman, and did not wear her heart on her sleeve: she exerted all her strength of will to avoid giving any sign of what she suffered, and if there was any humour to be extracted from her sad lot she would always do so, and raise a laugh at her own expense as merrily as at the expense of others. Only in her letter to the trusted intimate, Lady Charlotte Campbell, did she ever yield to the comfort of expressing what misery she experienced from her sad lot. Had Lady Charlotte not betrayed her royal mistress and published her letters, Caroline would have gone down to posterity as a stoic under misfortune: as it is, lightly as she bemoaned her fate, those who can read between the lines will see in her one of the most pathetic figures in the whole romance of history. "If I had not been miraculously supported, I could not have outlived all I have done: there are moments when one is supernaturally helped," so ran one of her rare outbursts; but of these she was always ashamed, and the following, if less true in fact, is more characteristic: "To tell you God's truth, I have had as many vexations as most people; but we must make up von's mind to enjoy de good, spite of de bad; and [snapping her fingers] I mind now de last no more than dat."

It was not only the wits who went to Kensington,

but other eminent persons and many leaders of society flocked there. Charles Abbot, Speaker of the House of Commons and afterwards Lord Colchester, mentions that, in July 1807, he dined at Blackheath and met the Duchess of Brunswick, the Duke of Cumberland, Lord Chancellor Eldon, Lord Mulgrave, Lord Dartmouth, Spencer Perceval, Sir Vicary Gibbs (Attorney-General), Sir William Scott (afterwards Lord Stowell), Sir William Grant (Master of the Rolls), William Eliot, General Grant, and others. In April 1809 William Windham found a pleasant party, which included Walter Scott, Lord Glenbervie, the beautiful Mrs. William Locke and her husband, Lady Charlotte Lindsay, Sir William Scott, Lord Aberdeen, Lady Maria Hamilton, "Monk" Lewis, Lord Littelton, Henry Gally Knight, and William Stewart Rose. Lady Oxford was a frequent attendant, and Lady Abercorn, Lady Jane Harley, Sir Henry Englefield, Sir Humphry and Lady Davy, the Glenberries, Brownlow North (son of the Bishop of Winchester), Lady Caroline Lamb, Lady Saltoun, Sir William Drummond, Lady Shaftesbury, Manners Sutton, Lord Westmorland, Lord and Lady Harrowby, the Duchess of Rutland, the Portlands, and the Beauforts. As Lady Charlotte Campbell remarked, "The company was of the best."

The formal dinner-parties and entertainments which she gave brought no pleasure to the Princess. Sometimes she would throw over an engagement to go to some person's where she knew the company would bore her; on other occasions she would dismiss her guests, finding the weariness of the party unendurable.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

[*Circa* 1810.]

Last night I gathered together, my dear, a room full of people, and when I did look round at them, I said to myself, *à quoi bon* this dull assemblage of tiresome people ? and it so happened that they were all ugly, and I longed to get them out of my sight, yet I could not send them away, having made them come. De fact is, I know not what to do. I am tired, or, rather, sad, because I have no *grand intérêt* to busy myself with. A Princess, and no Princess—a married woman, and no husband, or worse than none !—never was there a poor devil in such a plight as I am.

Lady Euphemia Stewart, that old *commère*, talked to me till I thought my ears would never be able to hear again. She thought I listened. Well, no matter. What think you I did ? I dare say they all said I was mad. I sent them all away, ordered the carriages, and set off wid a chosen few to the play. The first one made me cry ; and, strange to tell you, I felt a satisfaction in being able to weep. And den the second piece was a farce, and it made me laugh ; so dat amusement compensated for the dullification of the first part of the night. Little Lewis came into the box : he affected to be sentimental ; dat is always laughable in him, and I quizzed him. I do not think he enjoyed the fun.

She liked the small parties composed of her intimates, where every one was at ease. Like Napoleon, Blindman's-Buff delighted her. The Misses Berry found her, Lady Charlotte Campbell, Miss Garth, Lady de Clifford, and Sir William Drummond amusing themselves mightily by playing a game of cards called

by some such name as "Ninycumtwit." On another occasion, when Thomas Campbell had bored the company by reading some verses, she organised an impromptu dance and made the poet dance a Highland Reel. She liked the more strenuous dances, and one evening, selecting Rogers for a partner in a country dance of fourteen couples, distressed him, who was, as he pathetically recorded, doing his utmost, by continually calling out "*Vite! Vite!*" These were the scenes of debauchery, accounts of which, strangely altered, were given to the Prince Regent; and, indeed, so little license did she allow that she for a while ceased to invite Ward, who had transgressed the limits of good behaviour. "Dear Rogers, I am not invited," he wrote wittily in reply to Rogers, who had suggested they should go together to dinner at Kensington. "The fact is, when I dined there last, I made several rather free jokes, and the Princess, taking me perhaps for a clergyman, has not asked me back again."

Much has been talked and written about her "escapades," which were referred to with hands held up in horror by Lady Charlotte Campbell, and have been magnified into crimes ever since that worthy person gave to the world her reminiscences of her royal mistress. As a matter of fact, these "escapades" were one and all harmless to a degree that it is difficult to believe after all that has been said. Lady Charlotte was terribly shocked that the Princess would go with her ladies into Kensington Gardens and thence out into the public roads, wandering all over Bayswater as far as the Paddington Canal, thereby incurring the risk of being recognised and mobbed!

Worse still, on one of these occasions her Royal Highness called at houses in Bayswater, asked if they were to let, and actually inspected such as were! And, worst of all, England's future Queen degraded her royalty by getting into conversation with old people unknown to her—mark that, unknown to her—who were taking the air in Kensington Gardens! Criminality could go no further—at least, it would seem, not to Lady Charlotte, until in her opinion the Princess risked honour and fortune by taking under the patronage of her generous heart a family of Italian singers—father, mother, and son—named Sapio. Sapio had been formerly music-master to the Queen of France, and his wife has been described by the Comtesse de Boigne as "a very pleasant little person and a good musician." The Sapios were much sought after, but Lady Charlotte's blue blood revolted at the idea of her Royal Highness treating them as friends—mere musicians.

Again I dined at Kensington [Lady Charlotte wrote]. No company except the Sapios. Lady —— and I sat apart, and talked whenever we could hear one another speak; but the horrible din of their music hardly ever stopped the whole evening, except when it was interrupted by the disgusting nonsense of praise that passed between the parties. Interest and cunning excuse it from the low and servile; but really, to hear her let herself down so as to sing pæans to the Fiddler's son, who is after all gone away from her! Lady —— and I both agreed, it is more than human patience can bear, to witness such folly. The perpetual silly nonsense of the old buffoon, amounting often to impudence, crowns the whole.

The Princess was fond of going to places *incognito*, and once quarrelled with Samuel Rogers because he would not accompany her on one of these secret expeditions.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

Dear Lady Charlotte,

I still continue to live in the same active idleness. My party for Sunday dinner was small, as it did consist only of ten people; but Lord Byron was more lively and odd than ever, and he kept us in a roar of laughter the whole dinner time. In the evening, Catalani sung. William Spencer came with the family of Mr. C——. The daughter is the finest piano player I ever heard in this country—and Mr. Craven * and Mr. Mercer sung their delightful Spanish songs. At supper, Mr. Lewis was more absorbed and queer than ever.

Yesterday, I received your amiable letter, and would have answered it sooner, but that I forgot to have a frank. Lord Glenbervie does not come till to-day. After the hot and dull dinner at Spring Gardens,† I went to the Opera House to see a play—one act of an opera, and the ballet of *Psyche*, for the benefit of Kelly: it was as full as it could hold, and I returned to my solitary supper. I am rather early this morning, as I expect the Marquis. I have not yet seen *any body* that particularly *interests you* since you left this sphere. If I could be of any use to you, you know how glad I should be. I am always ready to do *mon petit possible*.

* Richard Keppel Craven (1779-1851), a son of the sixth Baron Craven, by his wife Elizabeth, afterwards the Margravine of Anspach.

† The Duchess of Brunswick then lived at Spring Gardens.

Monday the 18th will be a grand masquerade at Mrs. Chichester's—and, if you mention it to some of your intimate acquaintances, they would procure you some tickets for your family and your friends. There is a week almost to consider of it, and if it is agreeable to you, which is *sufficient* to me.

I had a very surprising visit yesterday from the Duke of Gloucester, and he comes the 24th to dinner. I cannot help thinking that the visit was intended for you. If he has no other merit, he has, at least, that of admiring beauties, which is the ninth part in a speech. I could write a volume to you, had I but time; but, as it is, you escape the misfortune, luckily for you—and I only subscribe myself, with the greatest pleasure,

Your most sincere and affectionate,

C. P.

Kensington would be the surest place to go from on *that* day. Lady Glenbervie must *not hear of it.*

Par causa, give me an answer soon.

The tickets being obtained, on the Monday evening the Princess, with two of her ladies, left Kensington Palace by a back-staircase, and was met by the male members of the party at the private door. At the Albany, where others joined them, the Princess changed her dress. The air of mystery may have given zest to the evening's entertainment; but it was quite unnecessary, for the Duchess of York, among other *grandes dames*, used to go openly to the masquerades.

This chapter may be brought to a close with some of the Princess's characteristic letters.

The Princess of Wales to Miss Berry, at Brighton

KENSINGTON PALACE, *Nov.* 26, 1810.

My anxiety is so great on account of the poor Lockes, * since the melancholy event of the death of their youngest child, that I am induced to commit, perhaps, an indiscretion in intruding on your leisure hours, my dear Miss Berry; but, trusting to your usual good nature, and our sentiments concerning them being so congenial, you will comprehend my solicitude. I entrust into your hands, and to your sound judgment, the manner how best to convey from my part everything that is kind and soothing to them: consolation it is impossible to offer them on such a painful occasion, but it is time alone that can cure so great an affliction.

Let us wave this melancholy topic, and rejoice together at the happy prospect of our beloved Monarch's recovery. We may now trust that that storm which passed over our heads will be dispersed for a number of years; it must be the fervent wish of every individual, but especially that of one of his first subjects.

I look forward with great pleasure to the period which will enable me to enjoy your agreeable society.

I wish to be remembered to Mr. and Mrs. Hope; and do me the justice to believe me, for ever,

My dear Miss Berry,

Yours very sincere and affectionate,

C. P.

P.S.—I am much shocked and grieved at the melancholy event of poor Lady Aberdeen.† I trust that she will feel no bad effect from the disappointment,

* Mr. and Mrs. William Locke, of Norbury.

† Catherine Elizabeth, eldest surviving daughter of John James, first Marquis of Abercorn.

for nobody deserves more respect and admiration than she does, by those who have the happiness of being intimately acquainted with her.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

February 6th, 1810.

It is ages, my dear Lady Charlotte, since I have heard from you; pray do me the kindness to write to me soon, and enliven the distress of my sojourn here by some of your eloquence. . . . Doubtless you have heard of the overwhelming calamity which has happened to Lord Auckland's family. About three weeks ago his eldest son, Mr. Eden, a young man of twenty-two, in perfect health and spirits, and highly prosperous as to worldly affairs (he possessed a place for life of two thousand per annum), went out at nine o'clock from his father's house in Old Palace Yard, and, saying he should return in an hour, he has never since been heard of. Hitherto every search has been made in vain; not a trace is to be found. People imagine he is drowned, but you may suppose de grief of the unhappy parents on dis melancholy occassion. Yet our friend Telemachus * could not resist making a pun on this *funèbre* event, and said, "Oh! dey ought to look for him in *Eden*; he must be there."

I had a party last night, and much lamented your absence; for it was more agreeable than such assemblies are in general. I had the Persian Ambassador, and the two Des Hayes danced and Catalani sung, and all de folk appeared to be pleased, so I was satisfied. I like to see people look content, which they do not often in this country, I must say.

My *better* half, or my *worse*, which you choose, has

* A nickname of Richard Keppel Craven.

been ill, I hear, but nothing to make me hope or fear. Pray burn this piece of high treason, my dear Lady Charlotte.

Lord Byron did inquire for you also, I must not forget to mention. He was all *couleur de rose*, last evening, and very pleasant; he sat beside me at supper, and we were very merry: he is quite anoder man when he is wid people he like, and who like him, than he is when he is wid oders who do not please him so well. I always tell him there are two Lord Byrons, and when I invite him, I say, I ask the agreeable Lord, not the disagreeable one. He take my *plaisanterie* all in good part, and I flatter myself I am rather a favourite with this great bard.

And now I must release you, my dear Lady Charlotte, from this long epistle, after telling you that I am pretty well, and try to fight with *de blue devils*, which, alas! often get the better of me. However, I am always—sick or well, gay or sad,—

Your affectionate,

C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

My dear Lady Charlotte, [*Undated.*]

I am much shocked to be under the necessity of so soon encroaching upon your leisure hours. You will be sorry to hear that Mr. S. L. Bernard has broke a blood-vessel, and the faculty have ordered him to go almost immediately into the country for his recovery. But as his place in the War Office keeps him so confined that he is never able to breathe the fresh air, his family is anxious, if it were possible, for him to obtain the situation of barrack-master, which is understood to be in the gift of Mr. Arbuthnot,*

* (?) Charles Arbuthnot (1767-1850) was from 1809-1823 one of the joint Secretaries of the Treasury.

in the environs of ten or thirty miles from London; as the close confinement, and the very laborious appointment he holds under Government, would otherwise soon put an end to his existence. You will, I am sure, therefore, be kind enough, my dear Lady Charlotte, to write in my name to Mr. Arbuthnot, to wish him joy on his nuptials, and as I trusted he would be in good humour to grant my request, that the first vacancy which may occur in the department near London, in the place of barrack-master, would be given to Mr. Bernard. I understand that Mr. Arbuthnot is at this moment at his new uncle's, Lord Westmoreland's, at Apethorpe. I must also mention that Mr. Bernard does not wish to have his present situation taken away until he is certain of another; and the business at the War Office being so great now, he cannot venture to ask leave of absence for several months; and he is under the apprehension in that case to leave his present situation. I venture to hope that my request will be granted by Mr. Arbuthnot; pray let me know as soon as you receive his answer.

Lady Oxford, poor soul, is more in love this time than she has ever been before. She was with me the other evening, and Lord Byron was so cross to her (his Lordship not being in a good mood) that she was crying in the ante-room. Only imagine if anyone but myself had discovered the fair Niobe in tears! What a good story it would have made about the town next day! for who could have kept such an anecdote secret?

Believe me for every yours,

C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Abercorn

May 3, 1810.

How can you ever think, my dear Lady Abercorn, that your name could stand anywhere in the wrong

place? wherever it stands it must give pleasure to your friends. So much about your postscript—the keepsake—or properly express'd, the talisman was sent immediately to Dr. Pemberton, and I expect by this time the Grand Mufti would have been decorated with it; and it is entirely his fault not having forwarded it sooner to Baron's Court. The kind offer you propose to me I am under the necessity to decline as I have even not been able to go to the sea side since my Mother is in England—her state of health being so precarious—and besides knowing so few people in England, I am absolutely necessary to her existence, which I did former times almost constantly —and which always was so beneficial to my health. But I even now cannot hope that I shall be able to accomplish it this autumn—this is all matter of fact, plain sense and dull reason; but still it prevents me from the pleasure of seeing you in your own Kingdom and to pass such happy days and moments as I passed at the Priory. As you recommend to me a steady old Man to bring me to your Chateau, Sir William Scott would be the only one I could choose, and who would fill that place with dignity and propriety—and if "*un qu'on dira t'on*" his situation which he holds prevents him from being tried, and to see his full bottom'd wig sticking upon Temple-Bar, not as an ornament, but as a memento to all gentlemen who are frail and commit deadly sins.

Lady Cha, altho' not in waiting, I see every week. The Aberdeens and Lady Maria chaperone her very often. Lady Maria is quite recovered in her looks and spirits. Walter Scott is now in London and I enjoy his society very much, he regrets much your being so far off, and he is a very sincere and true admirer of you and all your family. Monk Lewis was also once of the party, and we had nothing but ghost stories the whole evening. I gave him the

canvass to one which is upon fact. He wished to put it in verse, but he embellished it in such a manner that I do not know my own story, as he took so many "poetical licenses" with the person to whom it happened will never suppose that it was their own awful event. Perhaps it will entertain you for a moment and I enclose it in this letter.

Now as I have long enough trespassed upon your patience allow me to entreat of you to be remembered by you to all your family who have not forgotten me and my nonsense. If you do not receive any answer as soon as you ought account it to Lady Charlotte's neglect, for thro' her channel my scrawl will be forwarded to you.

Believe me for ever

Your most sincere

C. P.*

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

My dear Lady Charlotte, [*Undated.*]

I have been busy all this week trying to make up a match for Lady A. Hamilton. I have set my heart on getting her married some how or other to some man; she would be so much more agreeable if she was married; at present she is so full of old maid's whims and prudery, it is quite tiresome to be under her surveillance.

Lady Oxford has no thought but for Lord Byron. I wonder if she will succeed in captivating him. She *can* be very agreeable when she pleases, but she has not pleased to come near me for this long time past; she has quite forgotten that Kensington Palace used to be a convenient place to see certain folk, and be seen by them; *n'importes, ça m'est bien égal*; she does not make *la pluie ou le beau temps* to me, only

* From the original letter in the collection of A. M. Broadley, Esq.

it shows what her friendship is worth, and how little gratitude there is in her nature.

Lord Rivers, I think, is a little mad, but very interesting. Lady —— is in a great fright that Sir W. Gell is falling in love with her. I do not see the tender passion growing, but perhaps I am shortsighted: Lady —— is not apt to be vain. I wish you good-night, my dear Lady Charlotte; my eyes are begining to gather straws, as you English say, so no more from yours, &c. C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

[*Undated.*]

. . . . My *dragonne de Virtue* has been sick for some days, so I am in the utmost danger of being run away with by some of the enchanters who come to relieve locked-up Princesses. No hopes of getting the *dragonne* married; no one will venture to espouse Joan of Arc. Dey are all afraid of de Amazon, and I am not much surprised.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

DEAR LADY CHARLOTTE, [*Circa October* 1810.]

I am in a state of rage, being just returned from a visit to the Queen, who received me in a most cavalier manner. Luckily I restrained myself whilst in her august presence; but I could have abused her gloriously, so angrily did I feel at the old Begum. I will not submit again in a hurry to such a reception. She never asked me to sit down. Imagine such a piece of ridiculous pride! And when I asked after my poor dear uncle, and said I should like to see him, she made me for answer, "The King is quite well, but he will not see you." I replied, "Madam, I shall ask his Majesty himself"; she said *noting*, but smiled her abominable smile of derision.

Talking of Kings and queens, I heard the other day, from a lady who lives a great deal at Court and with courtiers, that a most erroneous opinion is formed in general of the Princess Elizabeth. The good humour for which she has credit is only an outward show, and this is exemplified in her conduct to the poor Princess Amelia, who is dying—quite given over, though her decay may be slow and tedious.* The Princess —— and Sophia are devoted to her; but the Princess Elizabeth treats her with the most cruel unkindness and ill-temper. So much for Court gossip! Everybody believes Princess Amelia is married to Mr. F[itzro]y, and they say she has confessed her marriage to the King, who is miserable at the expected loss of his daughter, who is his favourite; and I do not wonder, for she always appeared to me to be the most amiable of the whole set. So she is destined to be taken away. Well—perhaps it is as happy for *her*, *poor ting*, that she should; for there is not much felicity, I believe, amidst dem all. When I left the royal presence, I thought to myself, You shall not catch me here again in a hurry. No, truly I would rather have noting to do with the royal family, and be treated as a cipher, than be subjected to such haughtiness as I was shown to-day.

I have let out all the ebullition of my wrath to you, *chère* Lady Charlotte. Do not repeat it though, for the more said, the less easy is it to mend matters; so *bouche close*, and heart cased in iron; and the Princesse de Galles may be able to live in this uncivil *pays*, only sometimes it is necessary to open the safety valve, to let some of one's feelings escape, or else I should be suffocated.

Farewell; *croyez-moi toujours votre très-sincère amie*,

C. P.

* The Princess Amelia was taken ill in August 1810. She died on November 2.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

Monday, December 10, 1810.

My dear Lady Charlotte,

I am just on the point of setting out for the Priory, where I do not expect to be much enlivened, but go partly from civility and partly from curiosity, to make acquaintance with the "Ida of Athens" * which I trust will gratify my search for knowledge, or my taste for quizzery.

There is nothing new here under the sun, since you left the metropolis, and I lead literally the life of a recluse, for still public amusements are prohibited for the present. Thanks to heaven, no Lord Chancellor has been appointed yet, otherwise the dear operas would have begun by this time, and I should have felt myself obliged to renounce this great amusement. The parties in Hanover Square † are not more lively than they were last winter in Spring Gardens, except we miss the galanti show, which was exhibited, of all the old fograms, since the reign of George the First, which I suppose was intended to show the difference that existed between them and the beauties of Charles the Second, painted by Sir Charles Lely. But I am afraid his pencil, as that of Titian or of Marc [*sic!*] Angelo, would never have succeeded in making them rivals of that happy century; —their beauty was much more valued and praised, except there is one precedent, which will remain on record in the Argyll family. Your letter arrived most welcomely, as there had been various reports

* "Woman; or, Ida of Athens" was a romance published in 1809 by Miss Sydney Owenson (1783 ?-1859), novelist and dramatist, who was at this time a member of the Abercorn household. She married in 1812 the surgeon, Sir Thomas Charles Morgan.

† The Duchess of Brunswick now lived in Hanover Square.

about a *suspension d'armes*, an armistice, or a retreat, resembling that of Massena ; but all this puff must have been merely raised by envy, love of gossip, and newsmongers.

I intend to go to Blackheath before Christmas, to take in an additional stock of health, and strength, and spirits for the winter campaign, which I suspect will be rather longer than usual, parliament having met so early. Blackheath will be called *Le Palais des* [illegible], as the sleep will be the most predominant amusement and relaxation ; otherwise I would feel myself *dans l'ordre de la Trappe*, being with my lay sister, Miss Lisle, who has taken her resemblance from the living skeleton. If any body will take the pains to write my biography, they would inform the public, that for some dreadful and secret crime this penance was inflicted upon me. This is the way one may vouch for the historian's veracity. But as I flatter myself, that this wonderful production of epistolatory punning will remain in the archives of the illustrious family of ——, that upon record, matter of fact reasons of my absence from Kensington will be known.

Believe me for ever

Your most sincere,

C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

[*Undated.*]

I have been much amused with your remark concerning husbands, and I trust, dear Lady Charlotte, you will retain the same sentiment for ever, as I all my life thought husbands were only a creditable evil, and men in general a necessary plague. But so much about nothing.

I send you the enclosed answer from Messrs. Drummond, which is a very laconic one. I am still in hopes

that H——, by his influence, will succeed in my negotiation, as I really should not know how to turn myself if it should not succeed.

I must tell you an unpleasant circumstance which occurred to me one evening. I was in the ante-room; Mr. M—— and Lord L—— were talking together in the drawing-room, waiting for me, and I heard Lord L—— say, "The Princess is so vain and foolish, no one can do her any good; her English is the most ridiculous language any one ever made use of, and I could scarcely help laughing the other night when she said to me, 'Give me my wails'."

I did not stay to listen to any more of what these treacherous "friends" of mine might have to say about me, but I thought to myself, then why do you come so often to my dinners, &c., and I determined they should not be asked again in a hurry. However, I went in to them, and tried to be as civil as I could, but I felt furious when they made me fine compliments, and I soon dismissed them. So much for courtiers.

I send you Madame de Staël's pamphlet, and remain

Yours,

C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

MY DEAR LADY CHARLOTTE, [*Late in* 1810.]

After a second reflection, which the moralists assure us is the best of *all*, I shall be satisfied with the sum of £300, as I verily believe £500 is quite out of the reach of possibility at this period. I am much sorry for the dreadful trouble I put you to on my miserable account. . . .

I am afraid I shall not have the pleasure to see you tomorrow at Lady Anne Barnard's breakfast, as I intend to send an excuse, knowing it will be a very

dull party there. I cannot begin my day with tiresome people. I hope you will be able to come to Kensington on Friday, on which evening T. Campbell promised me to read his lectures to us.* In case you meet my mother at Lady A. Barnard's, I prepare you that she intends to pay you visits, and to ask you often to the house to dinner; now, as her parties, dear good soul, are vigorously dull, I should think the most prudent way would be that you inform her that you are to be absent from town for some time to avoid being made a victim of; her entertainments are *the* dullest ever invented. I am out of favour, but really I do not deserve it, so I try not to trouble my poor head with unnecessary evils, having so much to plague me that I cannot get rid of. I give a dinner on Sunday the 28th to Lord Grey and the Duke of Gloucester. Think you *that* would be a party that would suit ——? And now I will not tire you any longer, but only wish you much amusement at your ball, dinner, and concert.

I remain, yours, &c.,
C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

My dear Lady Charlotte, [*Late in* 1810.]

I hope you will be able to dine with me to-morrow, as I have got together what may be a pleasant party, if the people chuse to be agreeable; but that is always a doubtful question—so often pleasant folks are very dull, and stupid ones the contrary: the last exert themselves to do their *petit possible*, whilst the others, with greater means, will not condescend to pour out of their abundance. However, let us hope

* In 1810 Campbell prepared a course of lectures on poetry, to be delivered at the Royal Institution.

that all the wits and wise heads I have selected for my little party tomorrow will be communicative; and do let me have the pleasure of your company, *ma chère*.

The Duchess of Gordon's is the only house open just now, and people are all so busy about the tiresome politics, they tink of noting else. Lord Gwydir and Lady Willoughby are here, till the government is settled. There is another examination of the physicians by the Privy Council today, and Parliament meets tomorrow and will not adjourn till something is settled. Some people think the King will die, others that he will remain as he is; but at his age a complete recovery is not to be hoped, though the royal family have most wonderful constitutions. As for me, no changes, I feel sure, will make any difference in my lot; so I remain very indifferent to them all. The world is decidedly cutting me, right and left, since my poor uncle's relapse. *Mais que voulez-vous?*—'tis the way of the world.

Miss Owenson makes a great sensation at the Priory. I hear she is pretty, and she sings, dances, and performs all sorts of feats.

Au revoir, dear Lady Charlotte,

And believe me, yours affectionately,

C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

Friday [*December*, 1810] Blackheath.

Dear Lady Charlotte,

Here I am again, in the solitude of this sequestered place. I found it useless to remain in London, for every one has flown away, the poor King's increased illness have put a stop to all gaieties. Every body thinks he is going to die. Though he is not able to befriend me, yet I shall feel more desolate still when

he is gone, and there will then be no restrictions on the tyranny of the Regent.

I am not a coward, dear Lady Charlotte, and *tink* I could bear most suffering; yet I felt my heart smite the other day when I had a curious letter, sent me by an anonymous, written well, and full of fearful predictions as to my future fate. I cannot suppose why it was sent me, since the writer asked for no money or bribe, nor appeared to wish me evil, but rather to lament my fate. Amongst other things it contained, the writer said,—when I was Queen I should not be suffered to remain at Kensington, for that would be too near the other Court; and meaning, I suppose, that two Kings of Brentford could not reign peaceably together. My informer also said that they thought I might very likely be sent to Holyrood House, and play the part of a second Mary Queen of Scots. What tink you, dear Lady Charlotte, of this strange intelligence?

Everybody except me is longing for the change, and hoping they know not what from the poor old King's death. The Duchess of Gordon is at home to whist players; *au reste*, there is not a door open in London, I believe; and people have disputed with Taylor about the Opera subscriptions, and there has only been two operas, with nobody at them, as none of the boxes are taken this year. In short, all is *bouleversé*, and Heaven knows who or what will set things in order again.

So old Queensberry is dead at last! * I had a weakness for him, and so I believe he had for me. I hear General Wemyss is to have a lawsuit with Lord Wemyss about the succession, which he thinks he has a right to. The Duke's disposal of his money is

* William Douglas, fourth Duke of Queensberry, died on December 23, 1810.

very confused, and there are so many revocations after he has left the legacies, nobody knows who has got anything. Lord Yarmouth gets the chief part, or rather his *chère moitié.**

I have been much tormented lately by the advice of different friends—some commending my plans—some abusing me and telling me I was ill-advised, and my time ill-chosen for bringing forward my wrongs. Think of Miss —— telling me the other day that the royal family never abused me; I laughed in her face and said, "Does it not rain?" pointing out of the window when it was pouring: she looked very foolish, and held her tongue ever after. Yet, do you know, though *she* talked nonsense, I have been thinking also that every body is so busy about the war just now, and Government is very strong, so that perhaps it would be well to *retirer mon épingle du jeu* till the questions of the Catholics, East India Charter, &c., is decided, *pour mieux sauter*, and shall consult wiser heads than mine thereon.

People can't attend to minor things. The King may die, or there may be a Peace, or a destruction of the "Beast," as Lewis calls Buonaparte, which might be all in my favour, as making more money going; and I should gain praise from de *publick* by enduring my present state patiently a few months longer perhaps, and at present it would be considered quite a *party question*, not concerning me individually.

Think of the impertinence, dear, of Lady Oxford saying to me, "I wish the Princess Charlotte would learn to curtsey, for she has a most familiar *nod* that is not at all royal." I made her no answer.

And now, dear Lady Charlotte, you will be weary

* Lord Yarmouth (1777–1842), afterwards third Marquis of Hertford, had married Maria Fagniani, the reputed daughter of the Duke of Queensberry.

of this eternal letter, so I will say adieu for the present, and beg you to believe me,

Yours affectionately,

C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Lindsay

My dear Lady Charlotte, *January* 3, 1811.

I am like the Roman Empire, in a state of "decadence." When you meet me again in the month of March, the most violent pain, which you must remember I had once in my loins at the time you were with me at Kensington, paid me again a visit on the eve of New-Year's Day, and wished me joy (I suppose) on the season. This visitor gave me the most insinuating pain imaginable; and the spirit of turpentine, which I used most unmercifully upon my old carcass, has vanished the phantom who destroyed my peace like Major Arvay [*sic*], which deprived me from meeting you at dear Lady Glenbervie's, if a cold had not oppressed you also. I don't invite you for Monday, as I am not sure whether you will at that time not already be at the Priory; besides, it will be very dull, as only duty brings me to town to make first a visit in Hanover Square, and then an early dinner at five o'clock at Kensington. I only sleep one night there, as they tell me it is not proper to fly by night, "*pour la future Reine*," though I trust and hope that I am safer now than I have ever been—that that misfortune will not come over my head, as the accounts are every day better and better. I hope you are delighted with my dear friend Canning's speech, which was eloquent, judicious, and energetic. I have seen nobody since last Sunday. I sat between two philosophers, the one Greek and the other Hebrew. Mrs. Fish sat opposite them, like the figure of Justice with the scales in her hands,

measuring their words and sentiments, which, I am sure she, even by concatenation of ideas, did not understand, and they were like hypotheses and hyperboles to her waking brain.

By the newspapers of to-day I see that Lady Oxford is arrived at her new residence; and if it is the case that for once they say the truth, tell her that I shall be at Kensington on the 7th, and if she will come at ten o'clock, with my Lord and Lady Jane—Lord Archibald—I shall be delighted; otherwise she must come one morning, which we will then fix, to Blackheath.

Give my love to your friends at Lisbon, and tell them in what a state of seclusion I now live in, and of despair that they are from their native country. The first restrictions which it seems the present Regent has made upon Kensington is to be to appear in the garment of melancholy on the 7th, which, of course, as I am his first subject, I submit to without protest. I suppose you know that I remain here in this delightful and solitary recluse and sedentary residence till the 9th of February. My best compliments to Lord and Lady Abercrombie, and to the proud Aberdeen, who will not accept my box, at which I am very angry; for the moment Miss Hayman comes, I intend to procure a person who shall take it entirely off my hands for the present season, as certainly I shall not go again to the play for a long time. The reason I will tell you when we meet. I wish Miss Hayman was now with me, as she is entertaining and of high spirits, and at Kensington she is as a lost good between the many entertaining and pleasant people I meet there. Even the snow don't prevent me from walking. I have only been two days confined to my room. It is very true that a certain portfolio has been very much increased since my "*séjour* in this little *cabane*." I am now about writing a novel, of which the scene

lies in Greece, and the topography of Mr. Gell's book will be of very great use to me to make it as probable as possible.

I expect Mrs. Pole in ten days. Poor dear Mrs. Beauclerk does nothing but writing, and plaguing me to death with her unentertaining letters. I answered her for once, and told her that from my fireside, and the snow on the top house, and Mrs. Leslie's witticisms, I could not make out any sort of suitable letter to a friend; but, unmercifully, she has answered me immediately, two instead of one.

Now I think it is high time I also close my letter, as otherwise I fear you would also accuse me as I did Mrs. Beauclerk, on the fluency of my pen and the sterility of subjects; and believe me only yours sincerely and affectionately,

C. P.

CHAPTER IX

UNDER THE REGENCY

1811—1813

The Prince of Wales becomes Regent—Many acquaintances desert the Princess for her consort's Court—The Princess's entertainment to the French Royalties in England—The Regent intervenes—The Princess's feeling for the Regent—The Regent's attitude towards the Princess—His inability to start a political campaign against her—His unpopularity—His bad behaviour—He restricts the intercourse between the Princess of Wales and the Princess Charlotte—Letters from the Princess to her daughter—The Princess of Wales goes to Windsor—She is refused access to the Princess Charlotte—An envoy from the Queen—The Princess goes again to Windsor—She sees the Queen—The Princess Charlotte sides with her mother—She demands an establishment—A compromise effected—The Princess Charlotte declines to be presented by any one but her mother—The Princess of Wales's letter to the Prince Regent—Correspondence between her and Lord Liverpool—The publication of the letter.

WHEN it was realised that the King had become permanently insane the Prince of Wales, at the beginning of 1811, was appointed Regent; but, of course, no corresponding increase of importance attached to the Princess. Indeed, her position was much injured by her consort's increased dignity. Many persons who had remained faithful to her throughout her troubles now deserted her for the Regent, who, on his side, did not scruple to exercise all his influence to draw her acquaintances away from her. He

endeavoured, too, to dissuade others from accepting positions in her household, and the Princess was convinced that it was his doing that Lady Sheffield resigned the post of Lady-in-waiting. Certainly no persecution was too petty for his Royal Highness to originate, and it is easy to detect his royal hand in the attempt to wreck the dinner-party to which the Princess invited the French Royalties then in England.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

[*July* 1811.]

I should not so soon have encroached on your time, my dear Lady Charlotte, but that there has happened a few coincidences which to relate to you would perhaps afford you amusement.—Lord Deerhurst is quite a joke to the secret marriage of the *ci-devant* Mrs. Panton with a Mr. Geldi, an acquaintance of Batty's, and why it is kept a secret, and why it is made public, nobody can guess, as she was her own mistress—or that she thought that she was public property, and that it would be essential to have an act of Parliament to make an enclosure to become private property at a moment's warning.

Town grows every day thinner and thinner; though I had last Monday a large party at dinner; and in the evening a little hop for the young ladies, yet I felt how useful you would have been to make the party go off more lively and merry. *Clan Rowland* very unusually, danced with great glee the whole evening with Lady C—— E——; he supped at my table with her, and I have not the smallest doubt that Hymen will soon crown that work. Lord Mount Edgcumbe looked pleased with him, and praised him to me to the skies. Poor Miss Rawdon is quite forsaken by him, and I trust she will be wise enough

to console herself, as Ariadne did—and not choose a Bacchus, but something more eligible to her taste.

Though Lady Harriet is very cunning and sly, still I have discovered that she is the match-making lady to her brother. She brought Lady E—— to dinner, and did nothing but prose in praise of her. Lady G—— M—— takes her to ——, and Lord H—— is also of the party, and the final proposal will be made there under the shady trees, and by the placid light of the moon. The great ball at Devonshire House, I heard, was magnificent; Lord H—— began the dance with Lady E——, and she was introduced to the old Duke, who I hear, was very much charmed with her beauty, and I dare say this marriage will be settled before we meet again.

The H——, Lady P——, and the daughters, came also to my party; the old lady looked like the head of a ship, Lady P—— very embarrassed; the two young ladies, as usual, frightfully dressed—like naughty girls, with grey stuff gowns, to make them learn their lesson better the next day. The eldest danced with Brownlow North, and the two younger ones danced together. They did not stay to supper, but went away very early. I heard the next day that Lady C——s had sprained her ancle, which prevented her from going to dance cotillons next day at Lord D——'s. She sent, instead, early in the morning, for a surgeon, to Mr. Des Hayes, the dancer, and he came and said, "My Lady, *je sais bien arranger les jambes qui se portent bien, mais pas celles qui sont malades*"; and so he left the room, and she was obliged to keep company with the sofa.

Monday next [July 8] my humble habitation will be graced with the presence of Louis XVIII., Madame d'Angoulême, and all the French princes, and about thirty French people, at a breakfast. My mother and the Princess Sophia, and some old fograms, male

and female, will be there to enliven the party. This is all the merriment of my budget which I can offer you to-day.

Mr. Arbuthnot looks shy and dismal. I think he must feel ashamed of his cowardice, never to have asked me to one of the many suppers which he has given lately. There have been, I hear, very charming masquerades; but I speak from report merely. "*Mes beaux jours sont passés.*" But, be that as it may, I always remain,

Your affectionate friend,

C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

Wednesday, [*circa July* 10] 1811.

The accounts from Windsor certainly have been very terrifying for a few days, which has prevented my going since a week to the opera; but the accounts are now very much the same as they were a month ago, and I feel no apprehension that it will be worse, nor, I fear, better. My mother has been very ill indeed: her dinners have been postponed since a fortnight. I have been much at home, and not at all the worse for having seen a few people whom I liked the best. Mr. Sharpe * would do very well, if he was not a great gossip; and there are days when it would be very inconvenient to have him in society. . . .

Louis XVIII. could only offer me the gout in one knee and in one toe, and Madame d'Angoulême a swelled face; so that I have not been blessed with a sight of these charming creatures. Still I was reduced to the satisfaction of having forty, including my own family, to this great feast. The sight was not enchanting, as it was loaded with old fograms. My

* Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe (1781?–1851), artist and man of letters.

usual resource on this occasion is to shew the great apartments and the rarities they contain. At last (every thing, alas! ends), we were obliged to take to another resource, which was walking in the great avenue; and there we walked with all the plebeians, and with all the mobs. As our conviviality was exhausted as well as our wit, the military band supplied the sound of our voices. We lounged there till happily the clock struck eight, and then the party was swept away like magic. . . .

There was no doubt in the Princess's mind that the excuses sent by Louis XVIII. and Madame d'Angoulême were excuses, and nothing more; and in this belief she was right. These royal personages were staying at the Duc de Condé's at Wimbledon, where, on the day of the *déjeuner à fourchette*, they received the Duke of Cumberland. The Duke of Cumberland told the Duke of Brunswick, whom he met at a review an hour or two before the banquet: "You need not hurry yourself to go to Kensington. None of the French Princes will be there. I know they all are to be at the Prince of Condé's." However, it was not so bad as that. Monsieur, the Duc de Bourbon and his two sons, the Duc d'Angoulême and the Duc de Berri, with their gentlemen, went; as did the Comtesse de Rouillé, a natural daughter of the Duc de Bourbon, Madame de Ferronay, and Madame de Périgord, a sister of Anthony Butler St. Leger. The Duchess of Brunswick and the Duke were present; and the English contingent included the Prince Sophia of Gloucester, the Dowager Lady Lonsdale, the Dowager Lady Harcourt, the Dowager Lady Essex, Lady Willoughby d'Eresby, Lady Perceval, Lady

Crewe, Lady Mary Erskine, Lady Charlotte Lindsay, Miss Garth, Lord Chichester, Lord St. Helen's, Sir William Drummond, St. Leger, and the Glenbervies. This extended list is given to show that so early as July 1811 the Prince Regent had not succeeded in his desire to isolate his wife; but his efforts were not in vain, and gradually he contrived to detach from their adherence a great number of those who had rallied round him. "The Princess brought me and Lady Glenbervie (with little Billie [Austin]) in her carriage to Blackheath, where we dined with the Duchess [of Brunswick], and supped at Montague House," Lord Glenbervie noted in his journal, on October 21, 1811. "The Princess has removed all her plate, &c., and servants to Montague House, to remain an indefinite time. She seems tired of Kensington, and disgusted with it, and complains that nobody comes to her there." It was not long after that she indulged in what for her was the rare luxury of a bitter outburst on the subject. "No, no," she said to Lady Charlotte Campbell, "there is no more society for me in England; for do you think if Lady Harrowby, and the Duchess of Beaufort, and all that set, were to come round to me now, that I would invite them to my intimacy? Never. They left me without a reason, as time-servers, and I never can wish for them back again. I am too proud for that. I do not say that, were they to be civil again, I never would ask them to a great dinner or a ball; that is quite another affair. *Mais vous sentez bien*, that to have them on the intimate footing they used to be on, coming every Sunday night, and all that sort of thing, never. No, I repeat it, so long as that

man [*i.e.* the Prince Regent] lives, *les choses vont de mal en pire* for me—whoever comes in to serve him, even those calling themselves my friends, are just the same; they will set me aside and worship the Regent."

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

My dear Lady Charlotte, [*Late in* 1811.]

What shall I say?—that I am in low spirits? It will only vex your kind heart to hear of my being unhappy. Yet, *hélas*! it is the only news I can offer for your amusement. But it is so long since I have had the pleasure of seeing you or hearing anytink about you, that I must trouble you with a few lines, to ask you to let me have the satisfaction of hearing of your welfare; and also [to] let you know that such a person as I still exist on the face of the terrestrial globe.

I have lived very quiet since I saw you last, and no one has obtruded demselves upon my solitude; unless I do show them the knife and fork no company has come to Kensington or Blackheath, and neither my purse nor my spirits can always afford to hang out the offer of an Ordinary.

I have seen my daughter once; she do not look well, and I tink they not love her very much, poor soul, but I no say anything to make her grumble; it is best she should be satisfied with what is. She sees little of the Sultan, and he do not take the way to win her heart. *Mais ça lui est bien égal à ce qui paroît*; however, he may repent his conduct some day.

. . . Next month Lady C. Lindsay will take de charge of my soul and body, which she always do well, and she is very witty, and amuses me. . . .

Your affectionate

C. P.

It is not surprising that the Princess should have felt very strongly about her consort. In the late 'nineties she had said to Mrs. George Villiers, "I cannot say I positively hate the Prince of Wales, but I have a positive horror of him. Nothing shall shake the determination I have taken to live in no other way than the state of separation we are now in." A dozen years or so had wrought no change in her, and in January 1812 she wrote to Lady Charlotte Campbell, "The only astonishing news I can offer you is, that the Regent is dangerously ill; still I am not sanguine enough to flatter myself that the period to all my troubles and misfortunes is yet come. Yet one must hope for the best."

The Prince Regent would gladly have followed up his social with a political campaign against the Princess. His attitude towards her is very clearly defined by the story that when some one at Carlton House was talking about Wellington's victories in the west of Spain, "Damn the west! and damn the East! and damn Wellington!" his Royal Highness burst out tempestuously. "The question is, *how* am I to get rid of this damned Princess of Wales?" He knew, however, that it was impossible to take any effective steps against her while Perceval was a minister, for, though by some Perceval has been supposed to have used the Princess at the time of "The Delicate Investigation" for his own political ends, there was never any question of his sanctioning an attack upon her. "I have lost my best friend," the Princess said, after Perceval had been murdered in May 1812. "I know not where to look for another. Though even he changed towards me since he had become one of the

ministers. Whoever is in power becomes always more or less the creature of the Prince, and, of course, less friendly to me."

Perceval apart, the Prince's unpopularity with the public was so great as to deter any Ministry not actually dependent on his favour for its existence from embarking in any case that personally affected him. It may be read in Lady Charlotte Campbell's memoirs how, when on February 23, 1812, his Royal Highness drove in state from Carlton House to the Chapel Royal, St. James's, not all the pomp by which he was surrounded could elicit from the crowd a single huzza—not a hat was raised to salute the Prince Regent of England! Lady Charlotte may perhaps be thought prejudiced, but such a charge could not be brought against Romilly. He states that, in November of the same year, when the Prince went to open Parliament he was received in his progress through the streets in "dead and humiliating silence; no marks of disapprobation, but no applause"; while, as a contrast to this, the Princess Charlotte, who followed in another carriage, was greeted everywhere and by all with loud and prolonged cheers. There was yet another reason that precluded any action against the Princess being taken: it was generally believed, by Ward and many other discerning statesmen, that his Royal Highness's conduct would be regarded by the public as ample excuse for anything that could be brought against her Royal Highness. The Prince Regent had finally broken with Mrs. Fitzherbert, and was entirely devoted to Isabella, the wife of Francis, second Marquis of Hertford. "It is only a *liaison* of vanity on her part with my

better half," said the Princess; "and it will not last long—she is too formal for him." The prophecy, however, was falsified by the event—Lady Hertford's day lasted until 1820, when Elizabeth, Lady Conyngham, ruled in her stead.

If the Prince Regent could not do anything else, at least he could restrict the intercourse between the Princess Charlotte and her mother. There had been much trouble about this matter ever since the separation of 1796. In an earlier chapter it has been shown that in 1804 the King insisted that, under him, the parents had equal rights. The young Princess was brought up in a separate establishment at Shrewsbury House, Blackheath, under the supervision of her Governess, Lady de Clifford. Dr. Fisher, Bishop of Salisbury, directed her education, being assisted from 1810 by Dr. Nott and Dr. Short. The Princess of Wales naturally went frequently to Shrewsbury House from Montague House, whither her daughter used also to be brought; and when the mother was in residence at Kensington Palace, the Princess Charlotte used to visit her there twice a week. They corresponded in the intervals, and two of the letters, one of them hitherto unpublished, must suffice as specimens.

The Princess of Wales to the Princess Charlotte

My dear Charlotte, Blackheath, *August* 24, 1807.

Mama and myself join in thanks, and our best love for your very entertaining and amusing letter, and we have enjoyed the rational amusements you are able to receive from the situation which you inhabit, which I have no doubt but that they will

be conducive as well to your health as to your mind. But especially I have been much gratified by the account of the papers, with your reception at Brighton, which must have been an honour and a pleasure to you that your father wished to see you on his birthday, and I trust you will never in any day of your life deviate from the respect and attachment which is due to the Prince your father.

My letter cannot be so pleasant as yours was, as my mother and I have received the melancholy account of the Duchess of Gloucester's death as we are both very much attached to dear Princess Sophia, whose loss is irreparable, and we feel deeply for her in the new calamity in which Providence has placed her, and I trust that religion and resignation to the will of the Almighty will support her that she may not sink under the loss of both her parents.

My best compliments to Lady Clifford, and believe me for ever,

Your unalterably sincere and affectionate Mother,

C. P.

The Princess of Wales to the Princess Charlotte

[Kensington Palace] *August 7*, 1809.

My dear Charlotte,

I had my pen ready to write to you when I received your amiable letter, to enclose to you with pleasure the first success of our Expedition! Thanks to Heaven (considering the circumstances) few lives have been lost. I trust they may succeed upon Flushing also, but I have a horror for Capitulation, which generally ends in very bad Conventions on our part. I have heard nothing from Germany which rather surprises me. We must hope for the best. I am on the point to set out to see Strawberry Hill which I have never seen, along with Lady Charlotte,

and then we go with Lady Glenbervie to satisfy our voracious appetites as we shall have nothing but food for our minds at Strawberry Hill, not knowing Mrs. Damer, and not wishing to be acquainted with her. Lady Cha : is very sensible of your kindness to her. She is well deserving of it and is sincerely attached to you. I was yesterday for the last time at St. James's Chapel, but it was very dull and I do not know the name of the Clergyman.

I have heard nothing of the Kūpers and I hope she will be well soon. After Church I went to see Lady Aberdeen and Lady Maria. We found Lord Hamilton just returned from Ireland : his illness has borne upon his legs and he is perfectly upon crutches. I never can think that he will recover and it made me quite melancholy to see on the second sight the dreadful loss his family will sustain in this only and amiable son. He is to leave London as soon as he is a little recovered from the fatigue of his journey, for Dover Castle, with the Castlereaghs, who will take him there for the benefit of the sea air. I must now take leave of you as my carriage is ready. My best love to Lady de Clifford, and accept for yourself my single and unalterable affection with which I remain for ever

Your attached Mother,

C. P.*

The Prince Regent, soon after he had been put in a position to enforce his will, forbade the Princess to see their daughter more than once a fortnight. This restriction of intercourse was bitterly contested by her Royal Highness and the Princess Charlotte, both of whom determined to fight to the uttermost for the removal of the embargo.

* From the original letter, hitherto unpublished, in the possession of A. M. Broadley, Esq.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Lindsay

My dear Lady Charlotte, [*August*, 1812.]

Many thanks for your two kind notes; and I beg of you to send, as soon as possible, the two enclosed papers to Mr. Brougham; and mention to him, in the first place, that he is at liberty to show all the papers, present and future, to Lord Grey; secondly, that Lady Elisabeth and Mr. Whitbread saw the papers, and are aware of this cruel treatment; thirdly, that my daughter is perfectly aware of this dreadful barbarism, and that if possible her attachment is more steady and strong than ever before, and her eyes are completely opened to all the bad proceedings and illegal proceedings since my being in this country; that her father hardly speaks to her, and that she is not the least anxious that they should be upon another footing in future; in short, that she has a complete contempt of her father's character, which she obtained, *not from influence, but from her own sagacity, and experience which* she has made of a similar ill treatment. She abhors *the Queen* and *the Duke of Cumberland*. She has no confidence in any of the princesses, nor in either of the dukes. Miss Elphinstone, as well as Lady Barbara Ashley—two young ladies of whose acquaintance the Prince had approved two years ago, and who were the only ones she ever corresponded with—their letters were intercepted by the special order of the Regent; and though there was no high treason in them, *the correspondence was forbid, as well as the waiting*, for which reason my daughter has no other intimate friend than her mother. That she writes every day twelve pages, and sometimes more, having nobody to whom she could open her heart so freely and so trusty. I should be very grateful to all the family for having adopted this new plan to write, to prevent that I should ever have any influence

over her as my daughter; and I am now so united that no event could make a disunion between us. Even the great difficulty to get a letter to her, and to receive one, gives a zest to our correspondence. So you will see, my dear Lady Charlotte, by the letter from the Chancellor to Lady de Clifford, that there is no objection for the writing to me. I cannot otherwise look upon it than a trap to get possession of our correspondence, but which will be unsuccessful, as the letters are sent to Lady de Clifford's house, under her address, sealed with my own seal; and her confidential servant carries them himself down every two days. Lady de Clifford was to have been sent away if she had not shown proper spirit in mentioning to the Regent that, if he intended to send her away, Lord Albemarle and her son, Lord de Clifford, would ask an audience of the Regent to be acquainted with the reason for which Lady de Clifford was dismissed; for which reason, for the present, she is not moved. Charlotte is quite aware of it, and is perfectly determined to refuse any governess whatever, as she knows that she is of age, and wishes to continue to keep Lady de Clifford about her, either as governess or as Lady of the Bedchamber. Now, my dear Lady Charlotte, I leave to your own judgment into what small compass you intend to forward all this budget of complaint and plague. I trust I shall soon have the pleasure of seeing you again; and I am glad to hear that your new brother-in-law is good for something, and that it will succeed.

Yours,

C. P.

My daughter came to Blackheath this Tuesday. Saturday, the 22nd, she is to come to Kensington. Friday, the 21st—the Duke of Clarence's birthday—everybody shall be at Frogmore, for which reason she is with me this Saturday, 22nd of August.

Her daughter not being allowed to come to see her, the Princess went late in September 1812 to the Lower Lodge, Windsor, where she understood that the Princess Charlotte had been placed.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

Dear Lady Charlotte,

I have lived in such a confusion since you left me, that I don't know whether I am the besieged or the besieger. Lady Anne and I began by receiving an ambassador, the second day after she had been installed into all the secrecy of our nunnery. He was sent by our gracious Majesty, in short it was the Vice-Chamberlain, Colonel Disbrowe; his object being to stop my going to Windsor, and convey a refusal to my request of having my daughter to come to see me last Saturday. I was just sitting in Lady Anne's room, opposite to the sofa on which she was placed, when he was announced; she had never heard of his name, and supposed that he was a young and fashionable *beau*. She behaved like Joan of Arc in the whole of this business; was immovable; not a muscle of her face altered at the eloquent speech of this knight errant. I desired him to write it down on paper, to refresh my memory now and then with it; but he refused. Lady Anne then took her pen, and, in the presence of this ambassador, she conveyed his message to paper, which he read himself before he left the room and took his departure. I think this scene will make a pretty figure in *The Morning Chronicle* or in *The Examiner*; but I leave that to a much abler pen than mine.

One day I went with Lady Anne to see the English "St. Cyr" * at Lee, where I met Lady Perceval.

* A school founded by and under the protection of Lady Anne Hamilton.

I think you would have been amused for a moment with hearing the second Miss Grimani sing; she is one of the governesses. Sapio and his wife also sang duets and trios with her, and I was much gratified by the exquisite taste and great flexibility of voice of this young person.

. . . And now I must tell you something else.—I am so accustomed, my dear Lady Charlotte, to disappointments since my childhood, that one more or less makes not much effect upon my temper. I am only astonished how very little chivalresque feeling is remaining in this country; and Mr. Drummond certainly shall not be the Banker to George IV.'s Queen; for any historian, who would write the biography of the ex-Princess of Wales would not a little astonish the world in relating that she could not procure the sum of £500, at the rate of paying £500 a *year* per annum for it!!

The Princess of Wales told Colonel Disbrowe that she would obey the request if her daughter came to her as usual. This condition not being observed, the Princess went again to Windsor on October 4, but access to the Princess Charlotte was denied her. She then demanded to see the Queen, who received her, but gave her no satisfaction, merely referring her to the Prince Regent. It was now clear that it was to be war, and the Princess's advisers were pleased that they had so good a cause to fight. The opening of the campaign seems to have been deferred until late in November, when her Royal Highness addressed a remonstrance (revised and altered by Brougham) to the Queen, complaining of being separated from her daughter, and of her daughter being kept in close confinement. "The Queen's answer is full of lies and

evasion," Brougham wrote to Lord Grey, November 25, 1812, "and the Princess's letter is now with the Prince."

The Princess Charlotte was, on her side, making a good fight. "I must tell you," Brougham wrote to Lord Grey, November, 25 1812, "that the Princess Charlotte is extremely solicitous that her mother should be openly vindicated, and the Princess's wish for this proceeds almost as much from the desire of gratifying her as of punishing her husband. The young one is quite furious at *their* treatment of her. I mean Queen, Princesses, Dukes, and her father as much as any. She says she complained of her letters being opened at the post-office *by his orders*, which he denied circumstantially; and that she pressed him until she was obliged to stop, to avoid the unpleasant necessity of convicting him of a plain lie. This is her own story. As for the confinement at Windsor, she entertained a plan of escaping as soon as she was of age (for she conceives she is so next birthday—very falsely in point of law). She also desired my advice on this and other matters, and I am to write a representation as strongly as possible against it." The Princess Charlotte made a demonstration in her own interest at the beginning of 1812, when Lady de Clifford resigned, or, as some suppose, was compelled to resign, the position of Governess. The Dowager Duchess of Leeds * was appointed in her stead, and the appointment was made for two years. The young Princess wrote to her father, refusing to have another

* Catherine, daughter of Thomas Anguish, Accountant-General of the Court of Chancery, became in 1788 the second wife of Francis, fifth Duke of Leeds, who died in 1799.

Governess, and asking instead for an establishment and Ladies-in-waiting. Her contention was that, if she was reckoned old enough to reign at seventeen, she was certainly old enough to do without a Governess; but Thomas Moore believed that nothing would have been heard of this if the Princess Charlotte had been permitted "to keep her good old snuffy woman [Lady de Clifford], who had always let her do as she liked." The Prince Regent was furious at this revolt, and there were stormy interviews between father and daughter. The girl showed great firmness, but in the end was compelled to yield, but not before she had been granted Warwick House as a London residence and two "Lady Companions," Cornelia Knight and Miss Rawdon.

Another hitch occurred almost immediately. It was thought that the time had come when the Princess Charlotte should be presented at Court, and it was decided that this should take place at the Drawing-room held by her Majesty on her birthday, January 18, 1813. The Princess of Wales had privately arranged with the Princess Charlotte that she should present her; the Queen and the Prince Regent had decided that the presentation should be made by the Duchess of York. The Princess of Wales attended the Drawing-room to carry out her purpose, and the Duchess of York also came. The Princess Charlotte, who was waiting in an ante-chamber, was informed of her father's wish, but declined to accede to it, and as she exclaimed, "Either my mother, or no one," and could not be induced to give way, the presentation was postponed. On this occasion the Prince Regent and the Princess of Wales met in the Drawing-room, but only the slightest acknowledgment was made on either side.

The Princess Charlotte, however, attended a ball at Carlton House on February 5. On this occasion she caught cold, and another grievance was supplied by the refusal to allow her mother to come to her while she was confined to the house.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

DEAR LADY CHARLOTTE, [*February* 1813.]

I fear you have thought me very unkind not to have written to you before this; but I have been so annoyed about my daughter, Princess Charlotte, I have not had the power to tink of anything else. She was very unwell for some days, and though I begged hard, the Regent and the old stony-hearted Queen would not let me see her.

To tell you God's truth, I know not how long I shall be able to go on bearing all my sorrows. Come to me at Kensington on Tuesday next at three o'clock, and I will then tell you more; till then adieu. I reserve all the rest of my budget for *vive voix*, and remain yours, &c., C. P.

P.S.—My poor daughter wrote to me to tell me how she did herself every day, knowing the barbarity of those about her who would not let me go to her.

In the meantime the Princess of Wales had sent to Lord Liverpool and Lord Eldon a strong protest addressed to the Prince Regent.

The Princess of Wales to the Prince Regent

SIR, MONTAGUE HOUSE, *January* 14, 1814.

It is with great reluctance that I presume to obtrude myself upon your royal highness, and to

solicit your attention to matters which may, at first, appear rather of a personal than a public nature. If I could think them so—if they related merely to myself—I should abstain from a proceeding which might give uneasiness, or interrupt the more weighty occupations of your royal highness's time. I should continue, in silence and retirement, to lead the life which has been prescribed to me, and console myself for the loss of that society and those domestic comforts to which I have so long been a stranger, by the reflection that it has been deemed proper that I should be afflicted without any fault of my own—and that your royal highness knows.

But, sir, there are considerations of a higher nature than any regard to my own happiness, which render this address a duty both to myself and my daughter. May I venture to say—a duty also to my husband, and the people committed to his care? There is a point beyond which a guiltless woman cannot with safety carry her forbearance. If her honour is invaded, the defence of her reputation is no longer a matter of choice: and it signifies not whether the attack be made openly, manfully, and directly—or by secret insinuation, and by holding such conduct towards her as countenances all the suspicions that malice can suggest. If these ought to be the feelings of every woman in England who is conscious that she deserves no reproach, your royal highness has too sound a judgment, and too nice a sense of honour, not to perceive how much more justly they belong to the mother of your daughter—the mother of her who is destined, I trust at a very distant period, to reign over the British empire.

It may be known to your royal highness, that during the continuance of the restrictions upon your royal authority, I purposely refrained from making any representations which might then augment the painful

difficulties of your exalted station. At the expiration of the restrictions, I still was inclined to delay taking this step, in the hope that I might owe the redress I sought to your gracious and unsolicited condescension. I have waited, in the fond indulgence of this expectation, until, to my inexpressible mortification, I find that my unwillingness to complain has only produced fresh grounds of complaint; and I am at length compelled, either to abandon all regard for the two dearest objects which I possess on earth, mine own honour and my beloved child, or to throw myself at the feet of your royal highness, the natural protector of both.

I presume, sir, to represent to your royal highness, that the separation, which every succeeding month is making wider, of the mother and the daughter, is equally injurious to my character and to her education. I say nothing of the deep wounds which so cruel an arrangement inflicts upon my feelings, although I would fain hope that few persons will be found of a disposition to think lightly of these. To see myself cut off from one of the few domestic enjoyments left me—certainly the only one upon which I set any value, the society of my child—involves me in such misery, as I well know your royal highness could never inflict upon me if you were aware of its bitterness. Our intercourse has been gradually diminished. A single interview, weekly, seemed sufficiently hard allowance for a mother's affections. That, however, was reduced to our meeting once a fortnight; and I now learn that even this most rigorous interdiction is to be still more rigidly enforced.

But while I do not venture to intrude my feelings as a mother upon your royal highness's notice, I must be allowed to say, that in the eyes of an observing and jealous world, this separation of a daughter from her mother will only admit of one construction—a

construction fatal to the mother's reputation. Your royal highness will also pardon me for adding, that there is no less inconsistency than injustice in this treatment. He who dares advise your royal highness to overlook the evidence of my innocence, and disregard the sentence of complete acquittal which is produced; or is wicked and false enough still to whisper suspicions in your ear, betrays his duty to you, sir, to your daughter, and to your people, if he counsels you to permit a day to pass without a further investigation of my conduct. I know no such calumniator will venture to recommend a measure which must speedily end in his utter confusion. Then let me implore you to reflect on the situation in which I am placed: without the shadow of a charge against me—without even an accuser—after an inquiry that led to my ample vindication—yet treated as if I were still more culpable than the perjuries of my suborned traducers represented me, and held up to the world as a mother who may not enjoy the society of her only child.

The feelings, sir, which are natural to my unexampled situation, might justify me in the gracious judgment of your royal highness, had I no other motives for addressing you but such as relate to myself. But I will not disguise from your royal highness what I cannot for a moment conceal from myself, that the serious, and it soon may be, the irreparable injury which my daughter sustains from the plan at present pursued, has done more in overcoming my reluctance to intrude upon your royal highness, than any sufferings of my own could accomplish; and if for her sake I presume to call away your royal highness's attention from the other cares of your exalted station, I feel confident I am not claiming it for a matter of inferior importance either to yourself or your people.

The powers with which the constitution of these realms vests your royal highness in the regulation of the royal family, I know, because I am so advised, are ample and unquestionable. My appeal, sir, is made to your excellent sense and liberality of mind in the exercise of those powers; and I willingly hope that your own parental feelings will lead you to excuse the anxiety of mine for impelling me to represent the unhappy consequences which the present system must entail upon our beloved child.

It is impossible, sir, that any one can have attempted to persuade your royal highness, that her character will not be injured by the perpetual violence offered to her strongest affections—the studied care taken to estrange her from my society, and even to interrupt all communication between us? That her love for me, with whom, by his Majesty's wise and gracious arrangements, she passed the years of her infancy and childhood, never can be extinguished, I well know, and the knowledge of it forms the greatest blessing of my existence.

But let me implore your royal highness to reflect how inevitably all attempts to abate this attachment, by forcibly separating us, if they succeed, must injure my child's principles—if they fail, must destroy her happiness.

The plan of excluding my daughter from all intercourse with the world, appears to my humble judgment peculiarly unfortunate. She who is destined to be the sovereign of this great country, enjoys none of those advantages of society which are deemed necessary for imparting a knowledge of mankind to persons who have infinitely less occasion to learn that important lesson; and it may so happen, by a chance which I trust is very remote, that she should be called upon to exercise the powers of the crown, with an experience of the world more confined than that of

the most private individual. To the extraordinary talents with which she is blessed, and which accompany a disposition as singularly amiable, frank, and decided, I willingly trust much; but beyond a certain point the greatest natural endowments cannot struggle against the disadvantages of circumstances and situation. It is my earnest prayer, for her own sake, as well as her country's, that your royal highness may be induced to pause before this point be reached.

Those who have advised you, sir, to delay so long the period of my daughter's commencing her intercourse with the world, and for that purpose to make Windsor her residence, appear not to have regarded the interruptions to her education which this arrangement occasions; both by the impossibility of obtaining the attendance of proper teachers, and the time unavoidably consumed in the frequent journies to town, which she must make, unless she is to be secluded from all intercourse, even with your royal highness and the rest of the royal family. To the same unfortunate counsels I ascribe a circumstance in every way so distressing both to my parental and religious feelings, that my daughter has never yet enjoyed the benefit of confirmation, although above a year older than the age at which all the other branches of the royal family have partaken of that solemnity. May I earnestly conjure you, sir, to hear my entreaties upon this serious matter, even if you should listen to other advisers on things of less near concernment to the welfare of our child?

The pain with which I have at length formed the resolution of addressing myself to your royal highness is such as I should in vain attempt to express. If I could adequately describe it, you might be enabled, sir, to estimate the strength of the motives which have made me submit to it. They are the most

powerful feelings of affection, and the deepest impressions of duty towards your royal highness, my beloved child, and the country, which I devotedly hope she may be preserved to govern, and to shew, by a new example, the liberal affection of a free and generous people to a virtuous and constitutional monarch.

I am, sir, with profound respect, and an attachment which nothing can alter,

Your royal highness's

Most devoted and most affectionate
Consort, Cousin, and Subject,
CAROLINE AMELIA.

This letter was returned unopened the next day by Lord Liverpool, who stated that he was commanded by the Prince Regent to inform the Princess of Wales that, having some years ago declared he would never receive any letter or paper from his consort, his Royal Highness intended to adhere to that determination. On January 16 it was sent again by Lady Charlotte Campbell, who said that, as it contained matters of importance to the State, the Princess relied on their laying it before the Prince Regent. It was at once returned, Lord Liverpool stating that his Royal Highness saw no reason to depart from his determination. Lady Charlotte Campbell sent it once again, with a note expressing the Princess's confidence that the two Lords would not take upon themselves the responsibility of not communicating the letter to the Prince Regent, and that she should not be the only subject in the Empire whose petition was not to be permitted to reach the Throne. Lord Liverpool and Lord Eldon were worried by this adroit letter, for

they were far from anxious, indeed, they were determined not, to be saddled with any responsibility in the matter, which, as they foresaw very clearly, might be far-reaching in its consequences.

Lord Liverpool to the Princess of Wales

FIFE HOUSE, *Jan. 19th*, 1813.

Lord Liverpool begs leave to inform her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, that he communicated to the Lord Chancellor, according to her Royal Highness's desire, the letter which he received from the Princess on Sunday night. He has likewise thought it his duty to lay that letter before his Royal Highness the Prince Regent.

The Lord Chancellor and Lord Liverpool have never declined to be the channel of any communications which the Princess of Wales might be pleased to inform them that her Royal Highness was desirous of making to the Prince Regent through his confidential servants, and they would have been ready to have submitted to his Royal Highness any points in the copy of the letter transmitted by the Princess to Lord Liverpool, which it might have been their duty to have brought under his Royal Highness's consideration, if the Princess had signified to them her intention that the communication to his Royal Highness should have been made in this manner. But it must be for the Prince Regent himself to determine, whether he will receive, in the manner proposed, any direct communication by letter from the Princess of Wales, or enter into any correspondence with her Royal Highness.

The Prince Regent has commanded Lord Liverpool to state, that he adheres to the resolution which he has already expressed in this respect, and he has

directed Lord Liverpool, therefore, to return her Royal Highness's letter.

Lord Liverpool to Lady Charlotte Campbell

Fife House, 28 *Jany.*, 1813.

Lord Liverpool has the honour, in answer to Lady Charlotte Campbell's note of this morning, to acquaint her Ladyship for the information of her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales that the Prince Regent, having permitted the Lord Chancellor and Lord Liverpool to communicate to his Royal Highness the contents of the letter which they had received from the Princess in such manner as they might think proper, the letter of the Princess was read to his Royal Highness.

His Royal Highness was not pleased to signify any commands upon it.

It seemed that the controversy might continue indefinitely. On February 8 the Princess of Wales wrote to Lord Liverpool desiring him to communicate to the Prince Regent her Royal Highness's intention to go to Warwick House to see her daughter, who was unwell. Lord Liverpool replied that the Princess Charlotte was much better, and would go to see her mother at Kensington Palace on Thursday, February 11. On the Wednesday, however, the Princess of Wales's letter of January 14 appeared in *The Morning Chronicle*, and all the trouble began over again.

Lord Liverpool to the Princess of Wales

Fife House, *Feb.* 14, 1813.

Lord Liverpool has the honour to inform your

Royal Highness, that in consequence of the publication, in *The Morning Chronicle* of the 10th inst., of a letter addressed by your Royal Highness to the Prince Regent, his Royal Highness has thought fit, by the advice of his confidential servants, to signify his commands that the intended visit of the Princess Charlotte to your Royal Highness on the following day should not take place.

Lord Liverpool is not enabled to make any further communication to your Royal Highness on the subject of your Royal Highness's note.

Lady Anne Hamilton to Lord Liverpool

MONTAGUE HOUSE, BLACKHEATH, *February* 15, 1813.

Lady Anne Hamilton is commanded by her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales to represent to Lord Liverpool that the insidious insinuation, respecting the publication of the letter addressed by the Princess of Wales on the 14th of January, to the Prince Regent, conveyed in his Lordship's reply to her Royal Highness is as void of foundation, and as false, as all the former accusations of the traducers of her Royal Highness's honour in the year 1806.

Lady A. Hamilton is further commanded to say, that dignified silence would have been the line of conduct the Princess would have preserved upon such insinuation (more than unbecoming Lord Liverpool), did not the effect arising from it operate to deprive her Royal Highness of the sole real happiness she can possess in this world—that of seeing her only child. And the confidential servants of the Prince Regent ought to feel ashamed of their conduct towards the Princess, in avowing to her Royal Highness their advice to the Prince Regent, that upon unauthorised and unfounded suppositions, a mother and daughter

should be prevented from meeting—a prohibition positively against the law of nature.

Lady Anne Hamilton is commanded further to desire Lord Liverpool to lay this paper before the Prince Regent, that his Royal Highness may be aware into what errors his confidential servants are leading him, and will involve him, by counselling and signifying such commands.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

[Blackheath, *February* 16 (?), 1813.]

My dear Lady Charlotte,

I will not dwell upon all the subjects which you must have read over and over again in the newspapers, *pro et contra*, and you see now how prudent and wise it was in my friends, not to have published the other letters in question, till the mind of the public was ripe for the conception of all their infernal tricks. The only punishment which has for the present been inflicted upon me, is that Princess Charlotte has received orders not to come at all; which, of course, has occasioned a very delightful letter, dictated by me, to the skilful pen of Lady Anne Hamilton, to Lord Liverpool. Mrs. Lisle, as one of the valuable witnesses of theirs, has been sent for, and, with her usual grace and elegance, she will try to give herself some consequence, making it believed that she was one of my confidential friends, though she never had that honour.

There has been a letter forwarded to me, which I beg of you to send to Lisbon; but, as one of Miss Knight's cousins goes by Thursday, if you would enclose it yourself, with a few lines addressed to Miss Knight, Warwick House, it will reach completely. But I beg of you to mention it as your own letter, and not a commission.

I shall come in the morning of Thursday or Friday, after my luncheon, which is four or five o'clock,—and, by that time, I trust I shall have something more interesting to communicate to you. In the mean while, believe me,

Yours affectionately,

C. P.

CHAPTER X

THE PRINCESS OF WALES'S APPEAL TO PARLIAMENT

February—April 1813

The Prince Regent submits to the Cabinet the question of regulating the intercourse between the Princess of Wales and the Princess Charlotte—The reluctance of the Cabinet to undertake the task—A Committee of the Privy Council appointed—The official cause of summons—Suspicious new evidence brought forward—Divergent opinions in the Committee—A compromise effected—The Report—The Princess's protest to the Lord President of the Council against these secret proceedings—She determines to bring the matter before Parliament—Her advisers' fears allayed—Letters sent to the Lord Chancellor and the Speaker—The Lord Chancellor's reply—The Speaker reads the letter to the House of Commons—The text of the letter—It creates a great sensation—The country indignant that mother and daughter can only meet by accident—The great unpopularity of the Queen and the Prince Regent—Cochrane Johnstone moves resolutions concerning the Princess in the House of Commons—Lord Castlereagh denounces the Douglases as perjurers—The Prince Regent's anger—Letters from the Princess to Lady Charlotte Campbell—Whitbread announces that another secret inquiry was being held at Carlton House—Sir John Douglas frequently in consultation with the Prince Regent—Lord Castlereagh, by a threat of resignation, stops further investigations—The Douglases offer to repeat their statements—Sir John Douglas dismissed from the household of the Duke of Sussex and expelled by the Freemasons—Publication of "*The* Book"—Congratulatory addresses voted to the Princess—Her Royal Highness's reply to the City of London—She secures a town house in Connaught Place.

AFTER the correspondence between the Princess of Wales and Lords Liverpool and Eldon, and before the publication of the letter of January 14, 1812, the Prince Regent submitted to the Cabinet

From a print in the collection of A. M. Broadley, Esq.

CAROLINE, PRINCESS OF WALES.

the question of regulating the intercourse between her Royal Highness and their daughter, and gave them to understand that he hoped they might be able to justify his conduct and condemn that of his consort. The ministers were very unwilling to deal with the matter, but they could not refuse, for, as his Royal Highness put it, the education of the Princess Charlotte was the concern of the State, and they had to content themselves with explaining "that *crimination* of the Princess of Wales, or *justification* of his Royal Highness's conduct, were not proper subjects for their deliberation otherwise than as grounds of *advice* for the future regulation of his conduct in the education of the presumptive heir to the throne." In the end it was decided that the matter should be referred to a body of twenty-three Privy Councillors, which included twelve members of the Cabinet, four bishops, four judges, and the Speaker of the House of Commons (Charles Abbot). The Prince Regent was delighted by the appointment of this Committee, and he felt so sure that the result would be disastrous for the Princess of Wales that he told his daughter that an investigation was being made with respect to the conduct of her mother, on the result of which depended her ever being allowed to visit her again—a very serious investigation, he repeated with emphasis, that would most probably end in a manner most painful.

The Committee met for the first time on February 9, 1813, when Lord Sidmouth read the cause of the summons issued to them:

I have it in command from his Royal Highness the

Prince Regent, to acquaint your Lordships, that a copy of a letter from the Princess of Wales to the Prince Regent having appeared in a public paper, which letter refers to the proceedings which took place in an inquiry instituted by command of his Majesty in the year 1806, and contains, among other matters, certain animadversions upon the manner in which the Prince Regent has exercised his undoubted right of regulating the conduct and education of his daughter the Princess Charlotte; and his Royal Highness having taken into his consideration the letter so published, and adverting to the directions heretofore given by his Majesty, that the documents relating to the said inquiry should be sealed up, and deposited in the office of his Majesty's principal Secretary of State, in order that his Majesty's Government should possess the means of resorting to them if necessary, his Royal Highness has been pleased to direct, that the said letter of the Princess of Wales, and the whole of the said documents, together with the copies of other letters and papers, of which a schedule is annexed, should be referred to your Lordships, being members of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council, for your consideration: and that you should report to his Royal Highness your opinion, whether, under all the circumstances of the case, it be fit and proper that the intercourse between the Princess of Wales and her daughter the Princess Charlotte should continue to be subject to regulations and restrictions.

This inquiry was, to all intents, a new investigation of the charges brought against the Princess in 1805-6, and from which she was finally exonerated in the next year; and it was yet another investigation conducted in secret, and without the person accused being given

an opportunity of defence. "Whatever opinion one may entertain as to the Princess's character," Ward wrote to Mrs. Dugald Stewart—and he voiced the sentiment of many folk—"all honest people must, I should suppose, concur in thinking that the conduct of the Chancellor [Eldon] and those other members who signed the Minute of Council in 1807, in receiving that evidence which they themselves had declared unworthy of credit, is at once cruel, base, and absurd." The old papers were again brought forward, the stale, disproved charges once more examined: the only new document was a letter from the Queen dated February 16, 1813, in which she stated that the King, after the conclusion of the inquiry of 1807, had declared that the Princess of Wales could never be received as an inmate in the royal family and could only be treated with the common forms of civility. The Queen went on to state that since then the Princess of Wales had only dined once at Windsor and two or three times at the Queen's House, on each occasion the Duchess of Brunswick being present; and that the King, who in 1804 had intended to assign her Royal Highness a house at Windsor, had, after 1806, changed his mind, and called the house Augusta Lodge. It must be confessed that this letter is open to grave suspicion. If, after 1807, the King decided that his daughter-in-law was to be treated only with common forms of civility, how is it that his Majesty used to visit her at Blackheath and Kensington? In any case this second-hand evidence, given by one so notoriously prejudiced, could only be accepted if it could be corroborated. It is not surprising that the Committee held divergent

views. Lord Eldon refused to sign any document that did not contain a declaration of the Princess's innocence; Lord Ellenborough any document that did not contain a declaration of her guilt. These, of course, were the extremists, and eventually a compromise was effected, and a Report made to the Prince Regent on February 27, in which the following is the principal passage:

We beg leave to report to your Royal Highness, that after a full examination of all the documents before us, we are of opinion, that under all the circumstances of the case, it is highly fit and proper, with a view to the welfare of her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte, in which are equally involved the happiness of your Royal Highness, in your parental and royal character, and the most important interests of the State—that the intercourse between her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales and her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte, should continue to be subject to regulation and restraint. . . .

We also humbly trust that we may be further permitted to notice some expressions in the letter of her Royal Highness, which may possibly be construed as implying a charge of too serious a nature to be passed over without observation. We refer to the words—"suborned traducers." As this expression, from the manner it is introduced, may, perhaps, be liable to misconstruction (however impossible it may be to suppose that it can have been so intended) to have reference to some part of the conduct of your Royal Highness, we feel it our bounden duty not to omit this opportunity of declaring that the documents laid before us, afford the most ample proof, that there is not the slightest foundation for such an aspersion.

On the day that the Report was made the Princess of Wales made a formal protest against the proceedings in the form of a letter to the Lord President of the Council :

The Princess of Wales to Lord Harrowby

February 27, 1813.

The Princess of Wales has received reports from various quarters of certain proceedings lately held by his Majesty's Privy Council respecting her Royal Highness ; and the Princess has felt persuaded that these reports must be unfounded, because she could not believe it possible that any resolution should be taken by that most honourable body in any respect affecting her Royal Highness, upon statements which she has had no opportunity of answering, explaining, or even seeing.

The Princess still trusts that there is no truth in these rumours ; but she feels it due to herself to lose no time in protesting against any resolution affecting her Royal Highness, which may be so adopted.

The noble and right honourable persons who are said to have been selected for these proceedings are too just to decide anything touching her Royal Highness, without affording her an opportunity of laying her case before them. The Princess has not had any power to choose the judges before whom any inquiry may be carried out ; but she is perfectly willing to have her whole conduct inquired into by the persons who may be selected by her accusers. The Princess only demands that she may be heard in defence or in explanation of her conduct, if it is attacked ; and that she should be either treated as innocent, or proved to be guilty.

Either receiving no reply, or one that could not

by any possibility be satisfactory, the Princess determined to bring the matter before Parliament. According to Lord Holland, who had the information from Brougham many years later, her advisers "solemnly but secretly conjured her not to proceed, if on recollection she could charge herself with any impropriety or levity of conduct, much less anything approaching to criminality." Her Royal Highness, discerning their suspicions, laughed them to scorn. "Shortly afterwards," Lord Holland continued, "all their fears were unexpectedly allayed by a manœuvre of Lord Moira. In the hope of alarming Mr. Whitbread by the consequences of any serious investigation about the conduct of the Princess, that zealous but injudicious friend of the Prince spontaneously communicated all the charges and, if I mistake not, all the evidence that had been prepared against her Royal Highness to her immediate friends and advisers, *viz.* Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Creevey, and Mr. Brougham. From that time, they knew the extent of the case against their client, and, deeming it sufficient, proceeded in good heart, without hesitation or delay." Letters, identical in matter, were sent to the Lord Chancellor and the Speaker of the House of Commons. The Lord Chancellor returned the letters addressed to him, which, he said, he thought it his duty to advise the Princess, from considerations of propriety as well as safety, not to make public. He added that, by command of the Prince Regent, the visits of the Princess Charlotte to her Royal Highness were in future to be discontinued. The Speaker, however, decided, albeit with great reluctance, that it was incumbent upon him to read the letter to the House of Commons.

The Princess of Wales to the Speaker of the House of Commons

Montague House, Blackheath, *March* 1, 1813.

The Princess of Wales informs Mr. Speaker, that she has received from Lord Viscount Sidmouth a copy of a report from Lord Viscount Sidmouth made to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, by a certain number of the members of the Privy Council, to whom, it appears, his Royal Highness had been advised to refer the consideration of the documents and other evidence respecting her character and conduct.

The report is of such a nature, that her Royal Highness is well persuaded that no person can read it without considering that it conveys most unjust aspersions against her; and although their vagueness renders it impossible to discover precisely what is meant, or even what she has been charged with, yet as the Princess feels conscious of no offence whatever, she thinks it due to herself, and to the Illustrious Houses with which she is connected by blood and by marriage, and to the people among whom she holds so distinguished a rank, not to acquiesce for a moment under any imputations affecting her honour.

The Princess of Wales has not been permitted to know upon what evidence the Members of the Privy Council proceeded, still less to be heard in her defence. She knew only by common rumour of the inquiries which they have been carrying on until the result of those inquiries was communicated to her; and she has no means now of knowing whether these members acted as a body to whom she can appeal for redress, at least for a hearing, or only in their individual capacity, as persons selected to make a report upon her conduct. The Princess is therefore compelled to throw herself upon the wisdom and justice of

Parliament, and to desire that the fullest investigation may be instituted of her whole conduct during the period of her residence in this country. The Princess fears no scrutiny, however strict, provided she may be tried by impartial judges known to the constitution, and in the fair and open manner which the law of the land prescribes.

Her only desire is that she may be either treated as innocent or proved to be guilty. The Princess of Wales desires Mr. Speaker to communicate this letter to the House of Commons.

It may well be believed that this letter created a great sensation throughout the country. That it should be necessary for a Princess to appeal to the House of Commons that she should be " either treated as innocent or proved to be guilty " created much indignation throughout a nation whose proud boast it is to give fair play to all. Secret investigations never appealed to the minds of the British people, and that, on the report of a committee sitting in camera, the second lady in the land should be condemned as a person unfit to have access to her daughter provoked a feeling against the Queen and the Regent that it is not well a nation should entertain towards the members of its royal house. The Queen was hooted when she appeared in public, the Prince Regent drove through the streets with none so poor as to throw him a cheer ; on the other hand, the Princess of Wales and the Princess Charlotte had but to show themselves to evoke a great wave of enthusiasm. In this way the people contrived to make evident what they felt about a Prince who, living in adultery, was anxious to take advantage of his exalted position to suggest

that his consort was no better than him. The public feeling rose to a fever-heat of pity and indignation when the news was circulated through the country that on February 3 the Princess of Wales and the Princess Charlotte had at last met—and then only by accident—in Hyde Park. It was the last straw that this royal mother and daughter could only hold converse under such circumstances as these.

Even before the Princess wrote her letter to the Speaker, Cochrane Johnstone, on February 21, had given notice that he would move in the House of Commons a series of resolutions relative to the proceedings ordered by his Majesty to be instituted concerning the conduct of her Royal Highness. This motion, set down for February 24, was postponed until Monday, March 1, when pressing business before the House made it desirable to hold it over until the following Thursday. It was on the Tuesday intervening that the letter was read to the House by the Speaker. Cochrane Johnstone, in proposing his resolutions, arraigned the proceedings known as "The Delicate Investigation," and demanded that an open inquiry should be held. To this suggestion Lord Castlereagh demurred, urging that it was entirely unnecessary, since the Princess's innocence had been established by this same "Delicate Investigation"; and now, for the first time, her Royal Highness experienced the pleasure of having the Douglases denounced as perjurers by a Minister of the Crown.

This Report of the Commissioners, with all the evidence on which it was founded, had been referred

to his Majesty's then Ministers [Lord Castlereagh said]; and they, upon oath, had unanimously confirmed that report. This was not all—the same report and evidence had been referred to the subsequent Administration; and they in like manner, on their oath, had unanimously declared the innocence of her Royal Highness. I do not mean to say, that if any great doubt could be entertained by his Majesty's subjects on this important and delicate question, some declaration from Parliament as to the succession might not become necessary; but when such doubts have been so repeatedly negatived, would it not be giving a sort of weight and authority to the evidence of Lady Douglas? If the affidavits of profligate persons are thus to be sanctioned, where would be the end of such attempts? Fortunately there never was a case that could excite so little hesitation. A more monstrous proposition, than to legislate on Lady Douglas's evidence, has never been heard. The honourable member (Johnstone) had complained that no proceedings had been instituted against Sir John and Lady Douglas. I have to state that the first Cabinet distinctly recommended a reference to the then law-officers of the Crown to consider of such a prosecution; and if it had not been instituted, it did not arise from any doubt in the mind of those law-officers as to the punishment that would be brought down upon the degraded and guilty heads of Sir John and Lady Douglas, but it was from a wish to avoid bringing such subjects before the public.

Whitbread, who had been prepared to divide the House on the resolutions—for Cochrane Johnstone, there can be no doubt, moved them at the instigation of Whitbread—was so satisfied by the course of the

debate that he announced the abandonment of the intention.

The most complete defiance on the part of the Princess of Wales had been thrown out, in the presence of those persons who had the fullest opportunity of inquiry, and whose duty it was to inquire into every part of her conduct. So completely did she now appear acquitted of all possible imputation of blame; even by the persons from whom the aspersions were, by the world, supposed, in the last Report, to have been thrown upon her, that it is in my mind unnecessary to press the matter to a division. Her innocence is acknowledged entire—complete. To such restrictions as the Prince Regent, in his capacity of father of the Princess Charlotte, or by the advice of his Ministry, might think proper to impose upon her intercourse with her daughter, she must submit. It is her lot. But she has the satisfaction of knowing that her reputation henceforth is, by the confession of all, without imputation or reproach.

Romilly, who replied for the Commissioners of 1805-6, declared afterwards that the debate was a great triumph for the Princess and that the mortification of the Prince must have been even greater than her Royal Highness's pleasure. "The Ministers, or rather, Lord Castlereagh and some of his colleagues," he said, "to save themselves from the disgrace which their factious conduct on this subject in 1807 must draw upon them whenever the papers shall be published, concur in acquitting the Princess of all blame, and consequently throw all the odium of the neglect she has experienced upon the Prince." The indignation of the Prince at the manner in which the debate

in the House of Commons about his consort had been managed knew no bounds. His anger was for the moment ungovernable, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that he was persuaded by Lord Castlereagh from writing a letter on the subject which the Speaker should read in the House.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

My dear Lady Charlotte, [*March* 6, 1813.]

I suppose by this time you have been informed of the result of the business in the House of Commons yesterday. Though it is *in some measure satisfactory*, I AM NOT YET SATISFIED.

I should not have troubled you with these lines, were it not on account of a visit which you will receive to-morrow; namely, Mrs. [Beauclerc?]. She came this morning again, being very busy to carry messages back and forwards to Lord Grey, which I declined completely, and that she certainly never would disclose anything to Mr. A——t, though he was her great friend. I never saw any woman compromise herself in such a way as she did this morning; for which reason, I am *particularly* anxious, that if she should make any question to you, you would be *particularly* careful, and to avoid any questions *concerning the family of Oxfords*, Lord Byron & Co., as I cannot help thinking that she has more curiosity than ladies usually have. Sir Francis Burdett must also not be named. In short, you must be as much on your *guard as possible*. *Holland House* is, of course, entirely against *poor me*, and they have sent her as a spy to Blackheath.

Heaven bless you,—I am in great haste,

Your most truly affectionate,

C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

MY DEAR LADY CHARLOTTE, [*Undated.*]

Pray make any use you like of my Opera box, as long as you remain in town, as I have no inclination to go at present. Pray tell me what you hear, and what the general opinion of the world is, about my affairs.

I am very angry with Miss B., that she has refused my invitation. *C'est dans les moments d'adversité* that you know your real friends; but I must honestly confess, I begin to have a great *contempt for the world.*

Pray, my dear Lady Charlotte, if you can, call on Lady ——, who leaves London at the beginning of next week—and even England I may say—perhaps for ever. She will take it very kind of you, and I shall never *forget the pleasant moments and hours I passed at her house—the only ones I ever passed in England.*

The enclosed letter which you sent me, of the unknown lady, was offers herself to come forward with any *deposition* and document, has also written to *Mr. Whitbread*, which tempted me to send the letter you enclosed to *Mr. Brougham*, as he is upon *the spot*, and in a few days I shall inform you what the result of this inquiry has been.

I trust your health is good, that you may enjoy all the amusements which waltzing and suppers may offer you.

With these sentiments, I glory in subscribing myself,

Your most truly affectionate,

C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

MY DEAR LADY CHARLOTTE, *March 10th* [1813].

I hope you have been amused at the Opera yesterday.

Pray, if you hear any news, be so kind to communicate them to us. I am to see Mr. Whitbread to-day, on what further proceedings in the business will be necessary. I hear the Grand Mufti is furious against the House of Commons. Sir John Douglas passes his days, instead of Newgate, at Carlton House.

I have not yet seen Princess Charlotte except by chance in the Park, which was on that day five weeks ago.

I sent you a letter, which if you can get a frank for, so much the better; if not, you are so kind as to send it to the general post as soon as possible.

If you hear or see anything of the Sapios, send them this paper, and desire to know how soon the money is to be paid; it contains subscribers to his concert.

My best compliments to Mrs. D——, and my love to Miss B——: ask her what she now thinks of the House of Commons; and believe me my dear Lady Charlotte, ever

Your sincere and affectionate,

C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

March 15 [1813].

The intention of Mr. Whitbread is, that some questions will arise in Parliament this week concerning my business, and he has just given me the advice not to go to the Opera this week; for which reason I lose no time in informing you, my dear Lady Charlotte, that I shall not go this week.

I am in great haste, but believe me ever

Your affectionate

C. P.

You are at liberty, my dear Lady Charlotte, to make any use of my box that you please.

Whitbread, on the same day as he saw the Princess, gave notice in the House of Commons that on March 17 he would move for an address to the Prince Regent, praying his Royal Highness to order a prosecution for perjury to be instituted against Lady Douglas. On that occasion, he stated that he had drafted for the Princess a letter in which she made dignified submission to the Prince Regent. This he read to the House.

The Princess of Wales to the Prince Regent

SIR,

I once more approach your Royal Highness, and can venture to assure you, Sir, that if you will deign to read my letter, you will not be dissatisfied with its contents.

The report made by certain members of his Majesty's Privy Council was communicated to me by Lord Sidmouth, and its contents appeared to those upon whose advice I rely to be such as to require on my part a public assertion of my innocence, and a demand of investigation. It cannot be unknown to your Royal Highness that I addressed a letter to the Lord Chancellor, and a duplicate of that letter to the Speaker of the House of Commons, for the purpose of its being communicated to the Houses of Parliament.

The Lord Chancellor twice returned my letter, and did not communicate its contents to the House of Lords.

The Speaker of the House of Commons thought it his duty to announce the receipt of my letter, and it was read from the Chair. To my inexpressible gratification I have been informed, that, although no proceeding was instituted according to my request,

certain discussions which took place in that Honourable House, have resulted in the complete, and unequivocal, and universal acknowledgement of my entire innocence, to the satisfaction of the world.

Allow me, Sir, to say to your Royal Highness, that I address you now, relieved from a load of distress which has pressed upon me for many years.

I was always conscious that I was free from reproach. I am now known to be so, and worthy to bear the exalted title of Princess of Wales.

On the subject of the confirmation of Princess Charlotte, I bow, as becomes me, and with implicit deference to the opinion expressed by his Majesty, now that I have been made acquainted with it. His Majesty's decision I must always regard as sacred.*

To such restrictions as your Royal Highness shall think proper to impose upon the intercourse between the Princess Charlotte and myself, as arising out of the acknowledged exercise of your parental and royal authority, I submit without observation; but I throw myself upon the compassion of your Royal Highness, not to abridge more than may be necessary my greatest, indeed, my only pleasure.

Your Royal Highness may be assured, that, if the selection of society for the Princess Charlotte, when on her visits to me, were left to my discretion, it would be, as it always has been, unexceptionable for rank and character. If your Royal Highness would condescend, Sir, to name the society yourself, your injunctions should be strictly adhered to.

I will not detain your Royal Highness. I throw myself again on your royal justice and compassion

* The King had expressed a wish that the confirmation of the Princess Charlotte should not take place until her Royal Highness should have completed her eighteenth year. She was confirmed on December 29, 1813.

and I subscribe myself, with perfect sincerity, and in the happy feelings of justified innocence,

Your Royal Highness's, &c. &c.

This letter, Whitbread went on to say, had not been sent because it had come to his knowledge that once again examinations were going on, that emissaries had been and were being despatched to pry into every paltry circumstance of the life and demeanour of her Royal Highness since her arrival in this country; that the Solicitor of the Treasury, and other agents, had been set to work to ferret out evidence, etc. He challenged Lord Castlereagh to deny that such proceedings were in progress; but the minister made no reply. Indeed, it is not easy to see what reply a loyal servant of the Crown could have made. The Princess's statement in her letter to Lady Charlotte Campbell that Sir John Douglas passed his days at Carlton House was no mere flight of fancy. Sir John was at this time frequently with the Prince Regent, who could not believe that he had been deceived, and who, alone in the whole country, still had faith in the genuineness of the miserable man's deposition. So great was his credulity, inspired doubtless by his determination to believe everything that was said to his consort's detriment, that he had actually, without the knowledge of his ministers, set on foot the new inquiry to which Whitbread had referred. Clearly it was an impossible position for Lord Castlereagh in the House of Commons to be denouncing in the strongest terms possible the Douglases, while the Prince Regent at Carlton House was instigating them to repeat their perjured evidence. It was only

when Lord Castlereagh gave his Royal Highness the choice between accepting his immediate resignation or forthwith stopping further investigations that an end was put to the secret inquiry.

The Douglases, on the occasion of the debate on their conduct, with supreme audacity, presented a Petition to Parliament :

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom, &c.

The humble petition of Major-General Sir John Douglas, on behalf of himself and Charlotte Lady Douglas his wife—

Sheweth—That your petitioners are advised that the depositions they made on their oaths, before the Lords Commissioners appointed by his Majesty for investigating the conduct of her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, on or about January 1, 1806, were not made on such judicial proceedings, or before such a tribunal as could legally support a prosecution for perjury against them.

Feeling the fullest confidence in those depositions, and in the justice of their cause, they are ready and desirous, and hereby offer to re-swear to the truth of such depositions before any tribunal competent to administer an oath, that your petitioners may be subjected to the penalty of perjury if it be proved that they are false.

Your petitioners, therefore, pray that your Honourable House will adopt such proceedings as in your wisdom may be thought proper, to re-swear them to their depositions before such a tribunal as would legally subject them to a prosecution for such depositions, should they be proved to be false : it being

their anxious desire not to deliver themselves through any want of legal form. JOHN DOUGLAS.

The petition deceived nobody, for it was very clear that the Douglases were sure that their challenge could not be taken up, since it was an open secret that any prosecution of them must involve the Prince Regent. "Besides," Ward wrote to Mrs. Dugald Stewart, "in their situation it is worth while to risk anything for the chance of throwing off that load of infamy by which they are now oppressed." No notice was taken of their offer, but shortly after, presumably on the strength of Lord Castlereagh's public statement concerning them, Sir John Douglas was dismissed from the household of the Duke of Sussex, and expelled by the Freemasons of this country from the society; while the people in various parts of the country showed their opinion by burning both husband and wife in effigy.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

MY DEAR LADY CHARLOTTE, [1813.]

I send you back your letter, and I shall take care of the —— letter concerning our plan about our mutual friend's letters to be published. I have some particular reason that the title should be "Genuine Documents found amongst the papers of the ever-to-be-lamented Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Spencer Perceval," and that "in the year 1806, on the 11th of June, Mr. Perceval undertook the charge of very valuable letters and papers which were in the Princess's possession from the period that she came to this country, till the demise of Mr. Perceval. No

other inducement can be the motive of laying them before the eyes of the public, but to show how much this illustrious personage has suffered from the traducers and slanderers of her honour; and every British heart will feel the justice of her cause, and espouse it with energy and vigour."

This is only a rough sketch of the picture; I shall write to you more at length next Monday. I wish I could see you for an hour, as I think by word of mouth everything is better explained.

Ever yours, &c.

C. P.

This letter refers to "*The* Book," which the Princess had always been desirous to publish. Her advisers now thought the time was ripe for its issue, and the great interest and excitement aroused by it, coming as it did in March immediately after the parliamentary proceedings, showed that they had correctly gauged public opinion. The whole country so clearly evinced its sympathy with the persecuted lady that the Prince Regent thought it wise to endeavour to allay the prejudice against him by allowing the Princess Charlotte to pay a visit of condolence to her mother on the occasion of the death of the Duchess of Brunswick, which took place on March 23.

One of the first results of the discussion in Parliament of the Princess's business was that a flood of Addresses of Congratulation to her Royal Highness were voted—Southwark, Westminster, Middlesex, Rochester, Sheffield, Dublin, Bristol, and other places. The City of London led off, by passing almost unanimously at a Common Hall, convoked on April 2, an Address, moved by Alderman Wood, in which was

stated " the indignation and abhorrence " with which the Livery viewed " the foul conspiracy against the honour and life of her Royal Highness and their admiration at her moderation, frankness, and magnanimity under her long persecution."

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

Saturday morning [*April 6*, 1813].

My dear Lady Charlotte,

Whoever is in your agreeable society must forget all matters of business; for which reason I must now take up my pen to trouble you with these lines, and trespass upon your leisure hour. I wish you would be kind enough to write to Lord Melville in my name, to represent to him the very melancholy situation poor Lady Finlater has been left in, since the demise of the Duchess of Brunswick. She has literally no more than £300 a year, which is all she possesses in the world. The Duchess gave her £250 a year, and made her besides an allowance for candles and coals, and the rent for a small lodging-house in Manchester or Baker Street (I believe); and if Lord Melville would espouse her cause, to get her a pension of £500 a year, without deducting the income-tax, it would make the latter moments (which can only now be moments) of this poor, blind, and infirm woman, at least comfortable—and particularly coming through the channel of Lord Melville, whose father has always been her best and most steady friend. I leave all the rest, my dear Lady Charlotte, to your skilful imagination, and the pathetic for your excellent heart; and no one is more able to express right and amiable feelings than you.*

* Lady Findlater died during the year 1813.

By universal applause, the Address has been carried in the city, and I expect the Sherriffs this morning. But, of course, a very civil answer will be given, that I cannot receive them, having no establishment suitable to receiving the Lord Mayor and City; and, besides, being in deep mourning on the melancholy event of my mother's sudden death.

Lord Moira has given a very satisfactory answer to Mr. Whitbread, which arrived last night (before he leaves this country), about the private examination in his house—and a copy of it I shall send you of his "reminiscences," and I say, *mieux tard que jamais*. I send you also enclosed a letter for Miss Rawdon, to send to Mrs. Grethed, as I do not know her proper direction. Heaven bless you, and believe me for ever yours,

C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

Friday, April 7th [1813].

My dear Lady Charlotte,

As you like sometimes high treason, I send you a copy of the verses written by Lord Byron on the discovery of the bodies of Charles the First and Henry the Eighth: you may communicate it to any of your friends you please.

The Lord Mayor and Alderman, etc., etc., are to come on Wednesday at one o'clock, to Kensington, for which reason I shall send you my post-chaise, to bring you here at half-past nine, as I must set off at ten precisely, to prevent a crowd. I hope you are better, and that there will be no impediment to prevent your being at this great show.

Believe me,

Yours affectionately,

C. P.

The Princess fixed April 12 for the presentation of the Address from the City of London, and on that day her Royal Highness came from Battersea Bridge to avoid the enormous crowd assembled to greet her and draw her carriage in triumph to Kensington. The Prince Regent, foaming with impotent rage, found it convenient to go out of town that day. The Princess, supported by Lady Charlotte Lindsay, Lady Anne Hamilton, and Lady Charlotte Campbell, received in the state dining-room the Lord Mayor and Alderman, who were accompanied by more than one hundred and fifty Liverymen. The Princess, much moved, read, somewhat nervously at first, but gaining strength as she proceeded, a reply to the Address :

I thank you for your loyal and affectionate Address. It is to me the greatest consolation to learn, that during so many years of unmerited persecution, notwithstanding the active and persevering dissemination of the most deliberate calumnies against me, the kind and favourable sentiments with which they did me the honour to approach me, on my arrival in this country, have undergone neither diminution nor change in the hearts of the citizens of London. The sense of indignation and abhorrence you express against the foul and detestable conspiracy, which, by perjured and suborned traducers, has been carried on against my life and honour, is worthy of you, and most gratifying to me. It must be duly appreciated by every branch of that illustrious house with which I am so closely connected by blood and marriage; the personal welfare of every one of whom must have been affected by the success of such atrocious machinations.

The consciousness of my innocence has supported me through my long, severe, and unmerited trials; your approbation of my conduct under them is a reward for all my sufferings. I shall not lose any opportunity I may be permitted to enjoy, of encouraging the talents and virtues of my dear daughter the Princess Charlotte; and I shall impress upon her mind my full sense of the obligation conferred upon me by this spontaneous act of your justice and generosity. She will therein clearly perceive the value of that free constitution, which, in the natural course of events, it will be her high destiny to preside over, and her sacred duty to maintain, which allows no one to sink under oppression; and she will ever be bound to the City of London in ties proportioned to the strength of that filial attachment I have had the happiness uniformly to experience from her.

Be assured that the cordial and convincing proof you have thus given of your solicitude for my prosperity and happiness, will be cherished in grateful remembrance by me to the latest moment of my life; and the distinguished proceeding adopted by the first city of this great empire, will be considered by posterity as a proud memorial of my vindicated honour.

The Princess of Wales, at this time, was desirous to secure the lease of a town house, but suitable mansions were not easy to find, and more than once at the last moment the negotiations fell through—it was alleged, rightly or wrongly, owing to the exercise of the influence of the Prince Regent, who did not wish his consort to live nearer Carlton House than Kensington Palace. It was generally supposed that the Princess's reason for seeking a house was the

outcome of a rumour that she would shortly be evicted from the Palace.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

Wednesday, 5th of May [1813].

I shall in future be called "Queen Margaret in her sequestered bower," my dear Lady Charlotte, and you will be the fair Rosamond living with me in that bower. The short and the long of this is, blessed dear old Lady Reid be, for her good taste! I think her *house perfection*, and to-day, I believe, the contract will be signed. Some of the rooms which I have chosen for my own use are extremely dirty; but with soap and water and brushing and a little painting, I shall make them look well. The two drawing-rooms and the dining-room are truly magnificent old rooms, which would do credit to any old manor-house in Scotland. I have taken it for seven years, as it was impossible to take it for less; but, in case my situation should change before that period, I can let it whenever I please. It is no more than *eight hundred pounds a year*, which is extremely *cheap*: it is a complete villa in the midst of *town*, as you know that Curzon Street, May Fair, is close to Stanhope Gate, and the other end to Piccadilly, which will make it very easy for my friends to come. I hope in ten days I shall be able to live in it; though I may not be immediately quite comfortable, it is the only means to make the workmen be more speedy.*

The only news I heard on my return from my land of discovery to Kensington, is, that the Regent had the impudence to plan to give a ball to the Queen and royal family to-morrow at Carlton House, but

* The residence occupied by Lady Reade from 1793 to 1813 is that now known as Wharncliffe House.

his friends advised him not to do such a foolish thing.

What do you think of the Queen's attack by a mad woman? I suppose the true courtiers would wish that now an address should be presented to her Majesty, as her life, and, for what heaven knows, perhaps her honour, may have been in danger.

The city is now busy about an address to the Regent. It is to be hoped that it will be carried. I also hear that Lord Yarmouth is to leave England in course of a month. I am now in great haste to receive the address from Canterbury—and have only to add that I remain for ever,

Yours affectionately,

C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

[Montague House, *about May*, 1813.]

Dear Lady Charlotte,

I cannot sufficiently express how thankful I am to you for finding me a house. Mr. Sicard goes this morning to speak to Mr. Hugh to have it brushed up and cleaned immediately, that in the course of ten days I may call it my own house. I shall put some of the furniture from Kensington belonging to me in it, to make it a little more comfortable. To be sure, I do not like the situation of the house; but, as I have no choice, I must take the first house I can meet with. Your description of the one in Stratton Street has much amused Lady Glenbervie and Lady Charlotte Lindsay. I daresay it strikes the prudish Lord Archibald the same as you, that he will not allow his sister to lose his reputation in that pretty bower. She intends to sell it for two thousand pounds. I hope you have been much amused in town at your waltzing parties. Mrs.

Beauclerk was so fatigued that she could not bring her tired limbs to Blackheath to-day. I did not much regret her, as she was last Wednesday dreadfully out of humour.

I have seen nobody, except Mayors of Rochester and Town Clerks, and such pretty men, that I am sure they would have been an entertainment to you to have seen them. Some resembled Dutch burgomasters, others were like Aldermen, so fat and jolly-looking. They were all very civil to me, and did me respectful homage. Yet I was very tired of their fine speeches, and felt it *beaucoup d'honneur mais peu de plaisir*, to be set up in state for three hours receiving their Addresses. Joan of Arc was in waiting, and looked very grand. She is a good creature, and I believe attached to me very sincerely; but oh! *mein Gott*, she is wearisome. Job would have got in a passion with her, I believe.

Addio for the present. May all good attend you, my dear. C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

[Kensington Palace, 1813.]

My dear Lady Charlotte,

Many thanks for all the trouble you have taken about houses. I hope I have at last found one to put myself, my guardian angels, and all my goods and chattels in. —— did come this morning prosing, and saying My Royal Highness ought not to leave Kensington Palace: as if dere were protection and honour in these old walls! No, no; I must and will leave this royal hospital for the decayed and poor royalties, and live in some more cheerful situation, and one where my friends can come to me without paying the toll at the turnpike-gate. They would like to have me always shut up in this convent. Out

of ther mind out of ther sight, my dear. But I will not submit.

I send for your edification a criticism that has lately reached me, and remain for ever

Your affectionate

C. P.

P.S. I have made Joan copy out the *vers*.

[*Enclosure*]

THE COSTUME OF THE MINISTERS

Having sent off the troops of bold Major Camac,
With a swinging horse-tail at each valorous back,
And such helmets, God bless us! as never deck'd any
Male creatures before, except Signor Giovanni,
"Let's see," said the R-g-nt, like Titus perplex'd
With the duties of Empire, "whom shall I dress next?"
He looks in the glass, but perfection is there—
Wig, whiskers, and chin-tufts all right to a hair!
Not a single *ex*-curl on his forehead he traces
(For curls are like ministers, strange as the case is:
The *falser* they are, the more firm in their places).
His coat he next views; but the coat who could doubt?
For his Yarmouth's own Frenchified hand cut it out!
Every pucker and seam were made matters of State,
And a grand household council was held on each plait.
In short, such a vein of perfection ran through him,
His figure, *for once*, was a sinecure to him.
Then whom shall he dress? Shall he new rig his brother,
Great C-mb-rl-nd's Duke, with some kickshaw or other,
And kindly invent him more Christian-like shapes
For his feather-bed neckclothes and pillory capes?
Ah! no, here his ardour would meet such delays,
For the Duke had been lately packed up in *new stays*—
So complete for the winter, he saw very plain
'Twould be dev'lish hard work to *un*pack him again.
So what's to be done? *There's the ministers*, bless 'em.
As he *made* the puppets, why should he not dress 'em?

An excellent thought! Call the tailors; be nimble;
While Y-rm-h shall give us, in spite of all quizzers,
The last Paris cut with his true Gallic scissors.
So saying, he calls C-st-r-gh, and the rest
Of his heaven-born statesmen to come and be drest;
While Y-rm-h with snip-like and brisk expedition,
Cuts up, all at once, a large Catholic petition
In long tailor's measures (the Prince crying, "Well done!
And first put in hand my Lord Chancellor E. L. D. O. N.").

The mansion which the Princess of Wales rented was then known as Connaught House, and now as No. 7, Connaught Place, Marble Arch.

CHAPTER XI

FURTHER PERSECUTION OF THE PRINCESS OF WALES

April 1813—*July* 1814

The Princess of Wales deserted by general society for the Regent's Court—Some of her visitors—Madame de Staël—The Princess's melancholy—Rare appearances in public—The Vauxhall *Fête*—Rumours of further persecutions—Brougham's threat—The Princess's intercourse with her daughter—Letters written by the Princess of Wales—The engagement of the Princess Charlotte to the Hereditary Prince of Holland—The young Princess determined not to reside abroad—Her demand to see the marriage contract—The Prince Regent's refusal to show it—Pressure is brought to bear upon her—She resists all persuasion—The Queen desires the Princess of Wales not to attend her Drawing-rooms—Correspondence on this subject between the Queen and the Princess and the Princess and the Prince Regent—The Princess appeals to Parliament—Discussion in the House of Commons—Whitbread's speech—Adequate financial provision made for the Princess of Wales.

THE rest of the year 1813 was uneventful for the Princess, though her popularity remained to the end as great as it had been in the beginning. When she appeared at the opera every person in the house stood up and cheered, but not all the huzzas in the world could at this time assuage her sadness. "Supped at Lady Davy's with the Princess. She was tired body and mind, and, as she confessed herself, nothing less than intoxicated with the applause that she had received at the opera," Mary Berry wrote on April 12;

and three months later the same diarist recorded: "The Princess is melancholy, and almost in ill-humour, now seeing more nearly the truth as to her position." There is yet another entry, dated October 31, in the same journal: "The Princess was in good humour, but not very cheerful, and appearing to find her situation more hopeless, without the death of *one of the two*—which is very true." She now realised that no triumph in Parliament could be of any service to her in her every-day life, since, though her innocence was proclaimed on the house-tops, those who had once appeared in the guise of friends now showed by their actions that they preferred the Prince Regent's Court to any entertainments she could offer. She was not, however, entirely deserted, for among her visitors were included the Duke of Gloucester and the Princess Sophia of Gloucester, the Greys, Hardwicks, Lansdownes, Paulets, Cowpers, Lord and Lady Essex, Hobhouse, Byron, Hon. Henry Grey-Bennett, Lord Fitzwilliam, the Dunmores, the Glenbervies, Lord Nugent, and Lord Henry Fitzgerald. It was, however, an act typical of many when Madame de Staël, whom her Royal Highness was most desirous to meet, stayed away from Kensington.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

MY DEAR LADY CHARLOTTE, *June 27th* [1813].

I send you a new novel of Madame de Genlis' "Mademoiselle de la Fayette." I think it will interest and amuse you at the same time. The subject is taken from the reign of Louis XIII. and Anne d'Autriche. The colouring of the characters has

proved a very happy effort of genius, and, after my taste and humble judgment, I think it is one of the very best that she ever wrote, except "Les Vœux Téméraires."

I am in expectation of seeing Madame de Staël, and I shall fairly give my opinion upon this new meteor, which is now in full blaze upon our atmosphere. I trust it will not be long before I shall have the pleasure of seeing you again.

Believe me, in the mean while,
Your affectionate,
C. P.

I open my letter again to announce to you that Miss Johnstone is going to be married to Count St. Antonio, on account of her £40,000.

Lady Davy has not taken the least notice, by writing or by verbal message, of keeping her promise to bring Madame de Staël to me, and I begin to suspect that Madame de Staël will be guided by the torrent, and may live this moment in the hopes of being introduced on the 30th, *dans le Palais de la Vérité*.—On the following Friday, which is the 2nd July, I hear there will be given in Pall Mall also a breakfast *dans le Temple de la Justice*. I am determined to be very proud, and not to take one single step, if it is not entirely from Madame de Staël's own impulse that she becomes acquainted with me; but pray, if you have heard anything on the subject, and that my suspicions rest on a good foundation, *let me know*, as I am quite resigned to any disappointment of that nature.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

[*October*, 1813.]

All the news I can offer you, my dear Lady Charlotte, is a most dreadful blunder which that wonderful

woman, Madame de Staël, has committed. She was in some party several evenings ago and mistook old Mrs. B—— for the Marchioness of Hertford. She began by assuring her "*que la renommée avait vanté sa beauté et son esprit par tout le continent—que ses portraits étaient gravés, et faisaient les charmes et l'ornement de tous les palais.*"—Of course, you may imagine that this event has been the laughing-stock of these last eight-and-forty hours.—I had the unexpected happiness of seeing my brother return; he gives no sanguine hopes at all of the restoration of Germany, and he has a very sad opinion of Bernadotte.—To conclude my letter, I must only give you another piece of information, that Madame de Staël had discovered, not la Pierre Philosophate, but "that Lord Castlereagh's speech about the treaty with Sweden was the most eloquent, most rhetorical and pursuasive speech that was ever made in Parliament": these are Madame de Staël's own words. I fear this is not the way of pleasing in this country, at least not the generality of the English people. She also had a great dispute with Lord Lansdowne about the Catholic Question, which has, of course, given great offence to all the Opposition. At least he might have supposed that Madame de Staël must be tolerant; but writing and speaking seem to be two different things with her. I will not longer dwell upon her, and only anticipate the pleasure of having an agreeable *tête-à-tête* with you on Sunday morning.

Yours sincerely,
C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

[Kensington] *October* 9, 1813.

Nothing but discretion has prevented me from writing sooner to you, my dear Lady Charlotte, and also having had no pleasant news to entertain you

with. Sir Harry Englefield has left under my care a most beautiful maroon morocco portfolio for you, wherein all the witticisms, songs, and drawings have been collected for your perusal; but Mrs. Arbuthnot, who has left town for five weeks, is the cause of my not having sent it to you. The —— never came to take leave of me, though they told Miss Garth they intended to do so:—*ainsi va le monde*. I am becoming more and more insignificant every day, and cannot say I feel sure of having a single friend in England! It is a melancholy position, my dear Lady Charlotte, to be so *isolée*, but I must bear my fate, and keep up a good courage so long as I can. How long that may be, God He knows. I am ashamed of wearying you with my lucubrations, but you are always indulgent to my miserable self, and truly one must confide one's sorrows to somebody.

Mr. Ward has been in town since ten days, but he has not honoured Kensington with his witticisms and sarcasms. I was told the Regent wished to turn him away from me; *dat* is quite possible, but it would not break my heart; he is such an odd being, one cannot depend on him.

We go on here at Kensington in a *humdrum* way, and many days I dine by myself in my little room, and see only my two deputy guardian angels, only that they may see I am alive and well. The following week will be a little more lively, as dear Lady Glenbervie will take charge of my welfare, my soul, and my mind, and all my earthly worth and celestial. By the frank which this letter will receive, you will see who dines with me to-day, and that we are still in expectation of the gentle Devons.

Believe me, ever yours,

C. P.

Her Royal Highness had now little liking for public

functions, but it was thought well by her advisers that she should occasionally show herself, and this being so, she, of her own initiative, decided to go to the *Fête* at Vauxhall given on July 22, in celebration of the battle of Vittoria. This *Fête* was organised by one hundred and twenty stewards, who had each contributed fifty guineas for fifty tickets, and the Prince Regent, who had planned the affair, had announced his intention to be present. Men only were to be at the dinner, but the ladies of the royal family, including the Duchess of York, proposed to come on afterwards. The Princess wrote for tickets to Sir Charles Flint (presumably, the honorary secretary), but he replied that application must be made to the Committee of Stewards. This was done, and a reply came that all the tickets had been disposed of. Lord Gwyder, one of the Stewards, then sent her the tickets she wanted, and so this difficulty was overcome. "The consternation of Prinnie is wonderful," Brougham wrote to Creevey the day before the *Fête*. "I'll bet a little money he don't go himself, so that the whole thing will have gone off as well as possible." Brougham was right. The Prince Regent did not put in an appearance, whereby he did not increase the respect in which he was held, for if there were some who thought it imprudent of her Royal Highness to go, it was generally considered pusillanimous of his Royal Highness to stay away.

Lady Charlotte Lindsay to Henry Brougham

Wednesday [*July* 23, 1813].

Everything went off remarkably well last night. We waited at the Duke of Brunswick's till we heard

that the Duchess of York was at Vauxhall; we then proceeded there, and were much huzza'd and applauded by the crowd at the door, and also by the people in the gardens, which was much more than I had expected, having considered it always as the enemies' quarters. There were a few hisses at last, but very few indeed. The Duke of Gloucester escorted the Princess round the walks, and the Duke of Kent handed her out and took care of her to the Duke of Brunswick's house, where we supped. In short, nothing could be more right and proper, dull and fatiguing, than our last night's adventure.

It was excitements such as these that made life bearable to the Princess. Though there was peace, no one expected that it would last long, and in November Brougham heard that there was a rumour of something, what he did not know, to be attempted against the Princess, in which case he was determined that it should be war to the knife, no quarter to be asked, and none given. "If she is to be attacked," he said grimly, "she will be forced to bring forward her case at last, which, as against the Prince, she has (with great difficulty) been persuaded to keep to herself." It may be that a knowledge of this resolve kept the Prince Regent from initiating any further proceeding at this time. Meanwhile, her Royal Highness was anxious frequently to see her daughter, and on this subject she took the opinion of Brougham.

Henry Brougham to the Princess of Wales

[*December*, 1813.]

Mr. Brougham begs leave humbly to represent to your Royal Highness that it does not appear to him

in the least degree probable that any new difficulties will be thrown in the way of your Royal Highness's intercourse with her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte in consequence of the letter which it is intended to address to the Prince Regent; on the contrary, that step appears to him most likely to prevent any such new attempts against the comfort and interests of your Royal Highness and the Princess Charlotte.

Mr. Brougham takes the liberty further of stating it as his opinion, which he does with great anxiety and earnestness, that every proceeding ought to be avoided which should give to the enemies of your Royal Highness and the Princess Charlotte a pretext for blame: and that, however painful it may be for a little time, it is of the most essential consequence, both to the Princess Charlotte and to the country, that her Royal Highness should carefully avoid everything which might be construed by the Prince Regent's advisers into disregard of his authority. Your Royal Highness is aware that by law the care of the Princess Charlotte, and the management of her Royal Highness's education, is intrusted to the Prince Regent, and that there is no particular age at which the Princess Charlotte becomes freed from this authority, except that age of twenty-one, when, in common with every person, her Royal Highness becomes her own entire mistress. But although, strictly speaking, the Prince Regent has this control over the Princess Charlotte until she attains that age, yet it is a point which he will be obliged to exercise with a due regard to the wisdom of Parliament and the sense of the country. Provided the Princess Charlotte only continues acting the same amiable and wise part which has hitherto so eminently distinguished her Royal Highness, there can be no doubt that in a very short time Parliament and the country will render it impossible any longer

to persevere in the present most hurtful plan of secluding her Royal Highness from the intercourse and state required by her exalted station. Nothing could possibly prevent Parliament and the country from taking part with her Royal Highness, except some ill-advised proceeding which might have the appearance of disregarding the Prince Regent's authority; and Mr. Brougham is confident her Royal Highness has too excellent an understanding and too much fortitude to adopt any such plan, and too tender a regard for your Royal Highness, whose situation would inevitably be injured by it. Her Royal Highness will naturally regard the privations and hardships she now suffers as trials to which she is exposed, as her illustrious predecessor, Queen Elizabeth, formerly was, and will have the greatness of mind to disregard them, however painful at present, in the prospect of excelling even that renowned Princess, by reigning where *she* never did—in the hearts of a free people. Her Royal Highness may rest assured that her friends are active and zealous in everything relating to her interests. They consider her Royal Highness's interests to be, in fact, the same with those of your Royal Highness; because it is quite impossible not to see that the attempts against your Royal Highness must greatly injure—nay, very probably prove ruinous to—your Royal Highness's daughter.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

[*March*, 1814.]

. . . Of my health I have no right to complain, but the state of suspense and the ray of hope I had for some days past have kept my mind in a constant state of perturbation; but this happy vision has vanished, and the monster is fast recovering again. Princess Charlotte I have now not seen for six weeks

past.* The only great news I can offer you is Lady Charlotte Rawdon's extraordinary marriage with a lieutenant on half-pay, of the name of Fitzgerald; and the death of Sir John Douglas, which took place on the 5th of March, when exactly twelve months ago the division took place in Parliament upon his conduct. His burial was one of the most pompous ever seen, as if he had been the commander-in-chief himself, to the disgust and contempt of every body who saw that show passing; he has been buried at Carlton, to the great annoyance of the Perceval family.

I remain, for ever,

Your affectionate friend,

C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

[Kensington, *April*, 1814.]

I wish you would persuade Lady Augusta Charteris † to come to be my Lady of the Bedchamber for six months; and in case a great change in my situation should take place, which would enable me to go abroad, to take her with me. She would either take the six months' waiting at once, or divide them into three months', just as it would be convenient to her, as I have good reasons to think of preparing myself, one day or other, for my journey abroad. The late great events on the Continent enable now everybody to go over there, and the living there will be much less expensive. I can only assure you that £2000 of English money would make £12000 upon the Continent. I had lately occasion to transact some money

* The Princess Charlotte had visited her mother on December 14, 1813; and again on her eighteenth birthday, January 7, 1814.

† Lady Augusta Charteris, daughter of Francis Wemyss, second Lord Elcho (who had taken the surname of Charteris on succeeding to the estates of his maternal grandfather).

matters abroad; 300 dollars make just £50 English money, so that I could be very well and very comfortable in a fine warm climate, and liberty into the bargain.

I come to the royal menagerie on Tuesday, the 19th, not from idle want of variety, but from duty, mixed with very little inclination, to be civil to the very uncivilized society of the metropolis. The following day I have a great dinner of twenty people. The chief objects in the picture were the Duke of Gloucester and the Princess Sophia, and the Greys, Lansdownes, Cowpers, &c. In the evening every one who left their names at Connaught House; though many repented of their civility, and sent shilly-shally excuses for not attending the party. Thank God, the dreadful bore was over by twelve o'clock; the curtain dropped, and I retired in the green-room to my solitary den.

The other three days I saw nobody except the Prince Condé, who was the only gentleman who showed the least urbanity in taking leave of me. . . .

You may easily imagine I have not seen the Duchess of Oldenburgh, and I have also no curiosity to see a Kalmuck face. I shall have to-day Mr. Canning's party to dinner, which will enable me to get a franc for all this random of mine. To-morrow I give a children's ball for my little nephews, whose birthday it is. I have invited all the fathers and mothers who have children for that occasion. I am afraid it will be dreadfully dull for the old folks; and then I have concluded for this year of our Lord 1814 with the great and dull world, and shall only devote my hours and days to my especial friends.

The Ossulstons have followed Louis XVIII. Mr. Craven is gone in the same packet, commanded by Sir J. Beresford, in which the King is lodged, to Paris. His mother sends him to the King of Prussia for the

pension as Dowager Margravine to be paid, and even the arrears. His stay will be six weeks, but I am afraid unsuccessful with regard to his commission. Heaven bless you, my dear Lady Charlotte. C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

DEAR LADY CHARLOTTE, [*April*, 1814.]

I resume my pen again. By the franc which you received on Tuesday, you have seen that Lord Byron was of the party on Sunday; and he was really the hero of the party, for he was in very high spirits, free like a bird in the air, having just got rid of his chains. He intended still to go abroad, but where, how, and with whom, he is quite unsettled in his mind about it. I am sorry to mention, that his last poem upon "The Decadence of Bonaparte" is worthy neither his pen nor his muse. So much for him.

We sat down seventeen, and the dinner was as merry as any party of the sort could go off. Everybody was determined to be good-humoured and witty. Even old Borringdon did *son petit possible*. After we had left the gentlemen, and we ladies sat round the fire, equal in number to the nine Muses, a German flute-player of the name of Foust came to assume the place of the demigod Pan. He worked much upon the feelings of Lady Anne [Hamilton], who was quite enraptured. She went close to the sounds of his flute, looked strangely into his face, as if looking him through and through. Upon the other virgin's heart, Miss Hayman, he also had much effect. She took out her pair of spectacles, and went to the pianoforte to accompany this bewitching flute. Lady Anne acted the pantomime the whole time the music continued. I could admire neither the one nor the

other. This heathen god is deaf upon one ear, which occasioned him to produce a great many false notes, and I was too happy when released from this cacaphonie.

On Monday, as I mentioned to you, I had a little children's ball in honour of my nephews, Princes Charles and William [of Brunswick]. Twenty couples never were better fitted for dancing, for beauty, and skill. Lady Anne presided at the head of the large table appropriated for the children. There was no dancing after supper, but fireworks, which made the conclusion of the evening. I confess I was as tired as if I had danced also, from the noise and the total want of any real good conversation with the grown people. I think, in general, people are grown more old and dull since the two years I have not met them. Nothing but the wine at table exhilarates their spirits, and the high dishes take them out of their [illegible]. But I am glad to assure you that I have now done my duty for this year, and shall not be troubled again. I wish to God for never any sight of them.

Yesterday I made morning visits to Lady Glenbervie and Lady Charlotte [Lindsay], at the Pheasantry; this evening I go to Covent Garden, and to-morrow to Drury Lane, to amuse Willy, and to take away from the dreadful dreary and long evenings I passed with "La Pucelle d'Orléans." Everybody of my acquaintance almost is gone to Paris. Mr. Ward went on Monday; the Pools went, like conjugal felicity, to Paris also, and took their only *fruit d'amour*, Emily, with them. Lord Lucan has sold his house in Hamilton Place to Lord Wellington; the former is going abroad for three years, with his whole baggage of children. I say amen, as probably I shall never see them again, for which I shall not weep. The Emperor of Russia is expected in the course of a fort-

night, and as he has visited the Empress Josephine at Malmaison, he can have no objection to visit the Regent's wife at Kensington.

. . . I wish I could as easily as my thoughts do, convey myself to you. You may say a hundred things to a person, but it is impossible to put them all on paper. You can express your thoughts, but not your feelings, which is my present case.

What do you think of "The Wanderer" by Madame D'Arblais? It has only proved to us that she forgot her English; and the same suspicion has arisen again in my mind, that "Evelina" was written, or at least corrected, by Dr. Johnson. There is nothing out worth recommending in either language.

I understand that Madame de Staël has been much offended at the Regent not inviting her the evening Louis XVIII. was at Carlton House. She now laments much that she never came to pay me a visit, and sacrificed me entirely to pay her court to him. She is a very time-serving person. She is going to Paris immediately. A long letter of congratulation was written by her to Louis XVIII., and paying all possible compliments, after having abused them, and done the Bourbons all the mischief in her power. She is a very worldly person, and it is no loss whatever to me never to have made her acquaintance.

I shall return to my little nutshell next Saturday, the 30th, and shall feel myself much more comfortable, and not so damp, as in my present habitation, and to live like "*La dame de qualité qui s'est retirée du monde.*" Adieu, and believe me,

Yours most sincerely,

C. P.

The first stirring event of 1814 was the engagement of the Princess Charlotte to the Hereditary Prince of Orange, an alliance the only drawback to which was

that the Prince, as heir to the throne, would have to make his home in Holland. This fact was kept from the knowledge of the young Princess, who never dreamt that her marriage would result in exile from the country over which one day, if she lived, she would be called upon to reign. Eventually the situation was made known to her, in a letter from her mother—for they corresponded regularly; and she at once made up her mind that the engagement must be broken off if this condition was insisted upon.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

[*May* 20, 1814.]

. . . I have not seen Princess Charlotte for nearly five months. She is outrageous at the thoughts of leaving this country; and her unnatural father assured her that she should never have an establishment in this country. I expect Mr. Whitbread every moment, about this interesting subject. It will make a great rumpus in the Houses, both of Lords and Commons, which I trust will accelerate his departure to the skies. Believe me for ever, dead or alive, your most sincere

C. P.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

Kensington [*May*, 1814].

Why did you not come last evening to Rosamund's Bower, as Lewis calls this refuge for the destitute Princes and Princesses? I had Lord Byron, and the dear Gells, and Craven, and Lady Oxford, Mr. Beauclerk, and Lord Henry [Fitzgerald], and we were very merry, I assure you. It was daylight before we parted. We had also, I forgot to say, a General

Zublikroff, * just imported from Russia, who was an excellent person for Gell to play off his witticisms upon, and he made the most of the opportunity. He told him the Regent was dying of love for Lady Dartmouth, and that she was the reigning favourite just now, and the goddesss to whom he should pay court if he wanted a favourable reception from the Prince. The Prince believed it all like gospel, and amused us very much with his innocence and ignorance.

To speak of more sad and serious matters, I have not seen the Princess Charlotte for nearly five months. She is outrageous at the thoughts of leaving this country, and her unnatural father assured her that she would never have an establishment in this country; but I have advised her to be firm, and not frightened; and I think she will conquer. She is no child of mine if she submit to such tyranny.

I went yesterday to the meeting annually held of the National Education. I went with Lady Elizabeth Whitbread, and I was well received and applauded, which I know it will give your kind heart pleasure to learn; also Mr. Whitbread did make me a very pretty speech. I had Lady Charlotte Lindsay and Lady Carnarvon to escort me, and sat by the Dukes of Sussex and Kent—the first chairman of the meeting. There—what will the Regent say to that? I hear the Grand Duchess is charming in her manners, and has a sort of intelligence which my informer (I suppose forgetting he spoke to one of the unfortunate race) said was quite new in *the Princess* line. After this, I need scarcely say it was Mr. Ward who made his speech. The Duchess held a drawing-room at Devonshire House the other evening. I never have *signe de vie* now from any of that set, I mean G. L——w,

* General Zublikroff married Juliana, daughter of John Julius Angerstein.

W. C——s,—oh no! they are too wise to court the *setting sun!* I am interrupted, so good bye.

Croyez-moi pour la vie,

Yours most affectionately,

C. P.

The Princess Charlotte wrote on April 16 to her father, asking to see the marriage contract, expressing her surprise and uneasiness at not having heard anything about arrangements for a house and establishment, and begging that a clause should be inserted to prevent her being taken or kept out of England against her inclination. The Prince Regent made no direct reply, but sent for Miss Cornelia Knight and told her that he was very angry with his daughter, but would forgive her if she withdrew her letter; otherwise he must bring the matter before the Cabinet. He told Miss Knight that it was not his intention to banish the Princess Charlotte, but that it was the duty of a wife to follow her husband; that he might build a house for her, but that, in the meantime, she could always come to Carlton House. He went on to say that neither the Princess nor the Hereditary Prince had any right to see the contract, which would be settled between himself and the sovereign of the Netherlands; but that £50,000 a year was to be settled on her; her eldest son, as a future King of England, would be sent to England at the age of three or four; and that her second son would be King of Holland, and would be educated there. These provisions, he concluded almost pleadingly, would show that his daughter's interests had been well safe-guarded. This conversation was faithfully reported to the Princess Charlotte, who had made up her mind that she

would stay in England, and said so in accents of unmistakable determination. In vain the Prince Regent sent Sir Henry Halford to cajole or threaten; and then the Duke of York. William Adam, Chancellor of the Duchy of Cornwall, was the next envoy from Carlton House, and he told her that, after receiving presents and making a promise (as they put it), she could be compelled to marry the Prince of Orange. The young Princess most adroitly countered by admitting her ignorance of law, and asked, so that there could be no mistake, that this opinion could be given her in writing, in order that she should show it to Brougham, whom she had been consulting. After this apparently artless request, no more was heard of this subject. The Prince Regent, however, persevered, and he again sent the Duke of York; but him the Princess declined to receive a second time, and he went away, muttering to Miss Knight that his niece "laboured under a great mistake, for she seemed to consider herself as heir apparent, whereas she could hardly be considered as presumptive heiress." This remark was singularly unfortunate, for since her parents were living apart and most certainly would never be reconciled, heir apparent she was to all intents and purposes, unless her mother died or was divorced, and the Prince Regent married again and had a son. This latter possibility had been earlier pointed out to her by Brougham, who was anxious that she should have interest as well as affection in her support of the Princess of Wales.

It was about this time that a fresh affront was offered to the Princess of Wales, it being decided by the Prince Regent that she should be excluded from

participation in the festivities consequent upon the visit of the Allied Sovereigns to London after the proclamation of peace. Two Drawing-rooms were to be held by the Queen, and the Princess announced her intention to be present at one of these: whereupon the following correspondence took place.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

My dear Lady Charlotte, *May* (23 ?) 1814.

I did much regret your absence from my little party last night, for we were all very merry. The Gell, Berry, Sidney Smith, Lewis, Lady Oxford (*The Miscellany Harleyan*, as all the world does call her now), and Milord Byron, did make it very pleasant; and we all laugh till we cry. Lewis did play de part of Cupidon, which will amuse us, as you will suppose. He is grown so *embonpoint*, he is more droll than ever in that character; but he tink himself charming, and look so happy when he makes *les yeux doux* to the pretty ladies, that it is cruel to tell him, "You are in the paradise of the fools," so me let him sigh on to My Lady Oxford, which do torment Lord Byron, who wanted to talk with her, and never could contrive it.

Lady Anne is *en petite santé* just now; she is truly interesting; yet, as your song says, "Nobody's coming to marry her," nor, I fear, never well; so I and Joan shall live and die together, like two turtle doves, or rather like dem two foolish women, Lady Eleanor Butler and Mlle Ponsonby, who must be mad, I should tink, to choose to leave the world, and set up in a hermitage in Wales—*mais chacun à son goût*—it would not be mine. My dear Lady Charlotte, I do dread being married to a lady friend. Men are tyrants, *mais* the women—heaven help us, they are *vrais* Neros

over those they rule. No, no—give me my sweet Prince, rather than a female governess.

We are all so well, and in such good spirits, that we shall be at Worthing on Thursday at five o'clock, in the year of our Lord 1814, on the 26th of May.

There are wonderful and astonishing reports in the great metropolis: that the Queen has written a letter to the Princess of Wales, by the instigation of the Prince Regent, that the Princess is not to appear at the Drawing-room; and that the Princess has written a very spirited answer to the Queen, assuring her that her determination was to go, for which reason nobody believes that there will be any Drawing-room; but we will talk of it at our meeting.

So for the present I will only add that I am

Your sincerely affectionate,

C. P.

The Queen to the Princess of Wales

WINDSOR CASTLE, *May* 23, 1814.

The Queen considers it to be her duty to lose no time in acquainting the Princess of Wales, that she has received a communication from her son, the Prince Regent, in which he states that her Majesty's intention of holding two drawing-rooms in the ensuing month having been notified to the public, he must declare, that he considers that his own presence at her court cannot be dispensed with; and that he desires it to be understood, for reasons of which he alone can be the judge, to be his fixed and unalterable determination, *not to meet the Princess of Wales on any occasion either in public or private.*

The Queen is thus placed under the painful necessity of intimating to the Princess of Wales, the impossibility of her Majesty's receiving her royal highness at the drawing-rooms.

CHARLOTTE R.

The Princess of Wales to the Queen

MADAM, CONNAUGHT HOUSE, *May* 24, 1814.

I have received the letter which your Majesty has done me the honour to address to me, prohibiting my appearance at the public drawing-rooms, which will be held by your Majesty in the ensuing month, with great surprise and regret.

I will not presume to discuss with your Majesty, topics which must be as painful to your Majesty as to myself.

Your Majesty is well acquainted with the affectionate regard, with which the King was so kind as to honour me up to the period of his Majesty's indisposition; which no one of his Majesty's subjects has so much cause to lament as myself;—and that his Majesty was graciously pleased to bestow upon me the most unequivocal and gratifying proof of his attachment and approbation, by his public reception of me at his court, at a season of severe and unmerited affliction, when his protection was most necessary to me. There I have since, uninterruptedly, paid my respects to your Majesty. I am now without appeal, or protector; but I cannot so far forget my duty to the King, and to myself, as to surrender my right to appear at any public drawing-room, to be held by your Majesty.

That I may not, however, add to the difficulty and uneasiness of your Majesty's situation, I yield, in the present instance, to the will of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, announced to me by your Majesty, and shall not present myself at the drawing-rooms of next month.

It would be presumptuous in me to attempt to inquire of your Majesty, the reasons of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent for this harsh proceeding, of which his royal highness can alone be the judge. I

am unconscious of offence; and in that reflection, I must endeavour to find consolation for all the mortifications I experience; even for this, the last, the most unexpected, and the most severe;—the prohibition given to me alone to appear before your Majesty, to offer my congratulations upon the happy termination of those calamities with which Europe has been so long afflicted, in the presence of the illustrious personages, who will, in all probability, be assembled at your Majesty's court, with whom I am so closely connected by birth and marriage.

I beseech your Majesty to do me an act of justice, to which, in the present circumstances, your Majesty is the only person competent,—by acquainting those illustrious strangers with the motives of personal consideration towards your Majesty, which alone induce me to abstain from the exercise of my right to appear before your Majesty; and that I do now, as I have done at all times, defy the malice of my enemies to fix upon me the shadow of any one imputation, which could render me unworthy of their society and regard.

Your Majesty will, I am sure, not be displeased that I should relieve myself from a suspicion of disrespect towards your Majesty, by making public the cause of my absence from court, at a time when the duties of my station would otherwise peculiarly demand my attendance.

I have the honour to be, your Majesty's
Most obedient daughter-in-law and servant,
CAROLINE P.

The Queen to the Princess of Wales

WINDSOR CASTLE, *May* 25, 1814.

The Queen has received, this afternoon, the Princess of Wales's letter of yesterday, in reply to the

communication which she was desired by the Prince Regent to make to her; and she is sensible of the disposition expressed by her royal highness, not to discuss with her topics which must be painful to both.

The Queen considers it incumbent upon her to send a copy of the Princess of Wales's letter to the Prince Regent; and her Majesty could have felt no hesitation in communicating to the illustrious strangers who may possibly be present at her court, the circumstances which will prevent the Princess of Wales from appearing there, if her royal highness had not rendered a compliance with her wish, to this effect, unnecessary, by intimating her intention of making public the cause of her absence.

CHARLOTTE R.

The Princess of Wales to the Queen

CONNAUGHT PLACE, *May* 26, 1814.

The Princess of Wales has the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a note from the Queen, dated yesterday; and begs permission to return her best thanks to her Majesty, for her gracious condescension, in the willingness expressed by her Majesty, to have communicated to the illustrious strangers, who will, in all probability, be present at her Majesty's court, the reasons which have induced her royal highness not to be present.

Such communication, as it appears to her royal highness, cannot be less necessary, on account of any publicity which it may be in the power of her royal highness to give to her motives; and the Princess of Wales, therefore, entreats the active good offices of her Majesty upon this occasion, when the Princess of Wales feels it so essential to her that she should not be misunderstood.

CAROLINE P.

The Queen to the Princess of Wales

WINDSOR CASTLE, *May* 27, 1814.

The Queen cannot omit to acknowledge the receipt of the Princess of Wales's note of yesterday, although it does not appear to her Majesty to require any other reply than that conveyed to her royal highness's preceding letter. CHARLOTTE P.

The Princess of Wales to the Prince Regent

SIR, CONNAUGHT HOUSE, *May* 26, 1814.

I am once more reluctantly compelled to address your royal highness ; and I enclose, for your inspection, copies of a note which I have had the honour to receive from the Queen, and of the answer which I have thought it my duty to return to her Majesty. It would be in vain for me to inquire into the reasons of the alarming declaration made by your royal highness, that you have taken the fixed and unalterable determination, *never to meet me upon any occasion, either in public or private.* Of these your royal highness is pleased to state yourself to be the only judge. You will perceive, by my answer to her Majesty, that I have only been restrained, by motives of personal consideration towards her Majesty, from exercising my right of appearing before her Majesty at the public drawing-rooms, to be held in the ensuing month.

But, Sir, lest it should be, by possibility, supposed that the words of your royal highness can convey any insinuation from which I shrink, I am bound to demand of your royal highness, what circumstances can justify the proceedings you have thus thought fit to adopt.

I owe it to myself, to my daughter, and to the

nation, to which I am deeply indebted for the vindication of my honour, to remind your royal highness, of what you know,—that, after open persecution, and mysterious inquiries upon undefined charges, the malice of my enemies fell entirely upon themselves: and that I was restored by the King, with the advice of his ministers, to the full enjoyment of my rank in his court, upon my complete acquittal. Since his Majesty's lamented illness, I have demanded, in the face of Parliament and the country, to be proved guilty, or to be treated as innocent. I have been declared innocent, I will not submit to be treated as guilty.

Sir, your royal highness may possibly refuse to read this letter; but the world must know that I have written it, and they will see my real motives for foregoing, in this instance, the rights of my rank. Occasions, however, may arise (one, I trust, is far distant), when I must appear in public, and your royal highness must be present also. Can your royal highness have contemplated the full extent of your declaration? Has your royal highness forgotten the approaching marriage of our daughter, and the possibility of our coronation? I waive my rights in a case where I am not absolutely bound to assert them; in order to relieve the Queen, as far as I can, from the painful situation in which she is placed by your royal highness, not from any consciousness of blame, not from any doubt of the existence of those rights, or of my own worthiness to enjoy them.

Sir, the time you have selected for this proceeding is calculated to make it peculiarly galling. Many illustrious strangers are already arrived in England; amongst whom, as I am informed, is the illustrious heir of the house of Orange, who has announced himself to me as my future son-in-law; from their society I am unjustly excluded. Others are expected,

of equal rank to your own, to rejoice with your royal highness on the peace of Europe. My daughter will, for the first time, appear in the splendour and publicity becoming the approaching nuptials of the presumptive heiress of this empire. This season your royal highness has chosen for treating me with fresh and unprovoked indignity; and, of all his Majesty's subjects, I alone am prevented by your royal highness from appearing in my place, to partake of the general joy; and am deprived of the indulgence in those feelings of pride and affection, permitted to every mother but me.

I am, Sir,

Your royal highness's faithful wife,

CAROLINE P.

The Princess of Wales to the Speaker of the House of Commons

CONNAUGHT HOUSE, *June* 3, 1814.

The Princess of Wales desires Mr. Speaker will inform the House of Commons, that his Royal Highness the Prince Regent has been advised to take such steps as have prevented her from appearing at court, and to declare his royal highness's fixed and unalterable determination never to meet the Princess of Wales upon any occasion, either in public or private.

The proceedings of 1806 and 1807, and last year, are in the recollection of the House, as well as the ample and unqualified vindication of the princess's conduct to which those proceedings led.

It is impossible for the Princess of Wales to conceal from herself the intention of the advice which has now been given to the Prince Regent, and the probability that there are ultimate objects in view pregnant with danger to the security of the succession, and the domestic peace of the realm.

Under these circumstances, even if the princess's duty towards herself could suffer her to remain silent her sense of what is due to her daughter, and to the highest interests of the country, compels her to make this communication to the House of Commons.

The Princess of Wales encloses copies of the correspondence which has passed, and which she requests Mr. Speaker will communicate to the House.

After the letter to the Speaker and the correspondence between the Princess of Wales and the Queen and the Prince Regent had been read in the House of Commons, Methuen on June 5 moved, " That an humble Address be presented to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, to pray his Royal Highness that he will be graciously pleased to acquaint this House by whose advice his Royal Highness was induced to form the ' fixed and unalterable determination never to meet her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales upon any occasion, either in private or public,' as communicated by his Royal Highness to her Majesty, together with the reasons submitted to his Royal Highness, upon which such advice was founded." After the motion had been seconded, C. B. Bathurst, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, rose on behalf of the Government to deprecate the continuance of the debate on a subject so delicate, and pleaded for a withdrawal of the motion for the Address. The charges of guilt were irresistibly refuted at a former period, he said, and the question raised dealt merely with court etiquette. Whitbread, however, took a much more serious view of the matter, and in his outspoken manner brushed aside the sophistry of the

From an engraving by Hopwood, after a painting by John Opie, R.A.

SAMUEL WHITBREAD, M.P.

minister and laid bare the true state of affairs. His speech is especially interesting in view of what he said concerning possible complications when the King should die.

The speech of the right honourable gentleman in defence of the advice he has given, has been like the advice itself, special, minute, wavering, assuming a right to exclude, and acting as if he were conscious the party advised had no such right. He has treated this as being only an exclusion from an assembly, from a *fête*; but a positive exclusion the advisers dare not warrant—that is a proceeding too manly. It was an affront to be operated through the Queen, consort of that monarch, who, when he had the use of his faculties, had commanded her to receive the Princess of Wales at her Court, as the symbol of her entire innocence, of her complete acquittal. This reception continued till the King's indisposition; and then the Regent was advised to employ the Queen, his mother, to banish the Princess of Wales from Court. Could this advice have been risked had the King mentally existed? Oh, no! I should have thought that the right honourable gentleman and his colleagues would have been eager in their advice to conciliate and to calm, to proclaim the innocence they had so often declared. But the reverse is the case. . . . It is to be hoped that the Princess of Wales will, notwithstanding the moderation she had evinced, accept the advice to appear at Court; and then let us see who will advise that admittance be refused to her. As to stirring the question, I ask, who has stirred it?—Is it the person who vindicates her own innocence from unjust and foul aspersions?—Has she complained that her near relations have been prevented from visiting her; that it has been intimated to all, that to visit her is to exclude them from the

Court ?—To all the injuries she has patiently borne, she has submitted in silence. Where, then, does the burden rest of agitating the question ?—Upon those who have planned and advised this foul indignity and injustice. But the right honourable gentleman talks of this as being only an exclusion from a common assembly. Is it then nothing that her nephews, that her future son-in-law—the Prince of Orange, who has so announced himself to her—her near relation, the King of Prussia, the Emperor of Russia, the immortal Blücher, the companion-in-arms of her father—is it nothing that they should remark the absence of the Princess of Wales, and be told that it is for reasons undefined, and of which the Regent alone continues the judge ? Sir, under the circumstances of her situation, such infliction is worse than loss of life : it is loss of reputation ; blasting to her character, fatal to her fame. But this thing we hear to-day : no man now dares to say she is guilty. All the charges, says the right honourable gentleman, have been irresistibly upset. *Now, as to an event which sooner or later must happen, I mean the demise of the Crown, is the Princess of Wales to be crowned ? She must be crowned ! Who doubts it ? One hears it whispered abroad, a coronation is not necessary. I believe it is. Will the right honourable gentleman say it is not ? He dares not say so. Crowned she must be, unless there be some dark, base plot at work, some black act yet to do, unless the Parliament consent hereafter to be made a party to some nefarious transaction.* If it is their intention to try the question of divorce, let them speak out if such be their meaning. These proceedings materially affect the succession of the Crown. Where is the limit to the enquiries after former transactions, these searches after trial and acquittal ? Yet, after all the search, what have they found ? Nothing but what the right honourable gentleman

terms an irresistible refutation of all accusation. Now, Sir, if the right honourable gentleman has not a doubt of the Princess of Wales having a right to appear at Court, the use of which she has at present consented to waive, I have only to add, that if she finds not protection in this House, the last refuge of the destitute and oppressed, it is to be hoped that she will be advised to assert her right, and, however reluctantly, to dare the advisers of the Regent directly to execute their intentions.

Other members spoke on the subject, and gave direct pledges to support some more parliamentary motion, if the dissensions between the Prince Regent and the Princess of Wales were not arranged before the next Drawing-room, whereupon Methuen withdrew his motion, on the undertaking that he would, if necessary, bring it forward again in another form. On June 26 he reintroduced it, expressing surprise that steps had not been taken in the meantime to make it unnecessary for him to do so, and he demanded that an adequate settlement should be made for her Royal Highness's establishment; but, upon Lord Castlereagh undertaking that proper provision should be made, he again withdrew his motion.

A minor trouble of the Princess of Wales for many years past, as may be deduced from passages in her letters, had been her pecuniary affairs. At the time of her separation from her consort, the King had suggested that, for her separate maintenance, she should receive an allowance of £20,000 a year; but she was advised to reject this offer and let her bills be sent to Carlton House. This plan, as was only to be expected, did not work well. She was very

careless in money matters, profusely generous to her friends, her *protégés*, and to all in want, she was robbed by her servants and cheated by her tradespeople, with the result that in 1809 she had incurred liabilities to the amount of £49,000 for household and personal expenses. The Prince of Wales, who had paid the Princess's bills to the amount of £12,000 a year, declined to come to her assistance, and referred the matter to the ministers. They decided that the debts should be discharged, and that, besides £5,000 a year which she should receive as pin-money from the Exchequer, the Prince should henceforth make her an allowance of £17,000 a year, on the understanding that if, after this, any demand was made on his revenues by any future creditors of her Royal Highness, immediate application would be made to Parliament for an act to indemnify the Prince against her debts. She was soon in difficulties again, and her credit was so low that Drummonds' refused to lend her £500, and she had to borrow £2,000 from a private person at the heavy rate of 10 per cent. interest. In 1813 she endeavoured to obtain money by selling the lease of her house at Blackheath, and she was even reduced to selling some pieces of jewellery.

The Princess of Wales to Lady Charlotte Campbell

DEAR LADY CHARLOTTE, [*Undated.*]

I found a pair of old earings which the devil of a Queen once gifted me with. I truly believe that the saphires are as *false* as her *heart* and *soul* is, but the diamonds are *good*, and £50 or £80 would be very

acceptable for them indeed. I am quite ashamed of giving you all this trouble, but believe me,

Yours,

C. P.

These troubles were now to be removed from the Princess of Wales, though, as will be seen, it was some years before she had paid off all the debts she had incurred. In pursuance of the undertaking given in the House of Commons, Lord Castlereagh now wrote to her Royal Highness informing her of the intention of the Government. Whitbread wrote at the same time begging her not to sanction the introduction of the proposed measure, thinking that the acceptance of "this insidious offer, made in so unhandsome a manner," by removing one of her grievances, might weaken her case. The Princess, however, accepted the offer without hesitation, being prompted thereto by a reason unknown to her adviser.

The Princess of Wales to Samuel Whitbread

[*June* 30, 1814.]

The Princess of Wales informs Mr. Whitbread that she has been extremely surprised at the contents of his note. The Princess does not view the offer made to her by the Crown, through Lord Castlereagh, in the light in which Mr. Whitbread views it. As no conditions derogatory to Her as Princess or to her Honor as a female, have been annexed to the fulfillment of her rights. The Princess of Wales can have no scruple, therefore, whatever, in accepting the proposal which has been made to her, and the Princess cannot expect anything very respectful or attentive in the manner of the offer, coming from persons who have been at variance with her so many years. Con-

sidering this as an act of justice, and not as an act of grace, she has accepted it accordingly and incloses a copy of her letter to Ld. Castlereagh for Mr. Whitbread's perusal. A refusal to the Crown would have made her extremely unpopular. The Princess is, besides, weary of all the trouble she has endured herself, and been the occasion to her friends, and takes the whole blame upon herself by exonorating Mr. Whitbread from all responsibility whatever as to the issue of the event. The Princess of Wales shall never forget the true and sincere interest which Mr. Whitbread has on all occasions evinced towards her, but there are moments in life when every individual is called upon to act for themselves.

The Princess of Wales to Lord Castlereagh

June 30, 1814.

The Princess of Wales acknowledges the receipt of Lord Castlereagh's letter of yesterday evening, which contains a proposal from the Crown to offer her a revenue due to the rank and station in which she has been placed. As no conditions whatever, derogatory either to her rights, her rank, or her honour, have been annexed to this act of justice, the Princess of Wales accepts it unquestionably, in order to prove to Parliament that she is never averse to any proposal coming from the Crown to replace her in the proper splendour adequate to her situation, and to throw no unnecessary obstacles in the way to obstruct the tranquillity or impair the peace of mind of the Prince Regent.

Lord Castlereagh to the Princess of Wales

St. James's Square, 30*th June*, 1814.

Lord Castlereagh has been honoured with your Royal Highness's letter of this date. He hopes to be

enabled to submit to your Royal Highness in two or three days the draft of the bill proposed to be introduced in Parliament, the object of which will be to give legal effect to the arrangement agreed upon with your Royal Highness in the year 1809 extending the same to the augmentation to be made in your Royal Highness's income.

In the House of Commons on July 4 Lord Castlereagh proposed that an income of £50,000 a year should be paid to the Princess of Wales out of the Consolidated Fund, and this resolution was carried. To the general surprise, however, Whitbread, in the debate on the subject, expressed the opinion that the grant was larger than had been expected; and subsequently, thinking thereby to secure for her a further popularity, he induced her Royal Highness to signify that this was her opinion.

The Princess of Wales to the Speaker of the House of Commons

Connaught House, *July* 5, 1814.

The Princess of Wales desires Mr. Speaker to acquaint the House of Commons, that she has received from Viscount Castlereagh, the copy of a resolution voted yesterday in a Committee of the whole House, enabling his Majesty to grant out of the Consolidated Fund of Great Britain the annual sum of £50,000 for her maintenance; and the Princess of Wales desires Mr. Speaker will express to the House of Commons, her sincere thanks for this extraordinary and unsolicited mark of its munificence.

The Princess of Wales, at the same time, desires Mr. Speaker will inform the House of her deep regret,

that the burthens of the people should be at all increased, on account of the circumstances in which she has been placed; and that she cannot consent to any addition to those burthens beyond what her actual situation may appear to require; and that she therefore hopes the House will reconsider its resolution, for the purpose of limiting the income proposed to be settled upon the Princess of Wales to the annual sum of £35,000, which will be quite sufficient, and will be accepted with the liveliest gratitude, as an unequivocal proof that the Princess of Wales has secured the good opinion and protection of the House of Commons.

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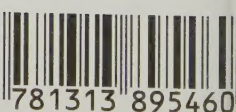

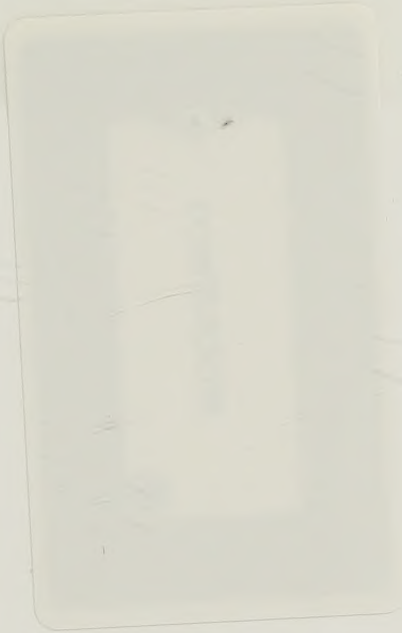

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